



I will that Thascius Cyprian be Beheaded.



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THE
Genuine WORKS
OF
ST CYPRIAN,
ARCHBISHOP of
CARTHAGE,
AND

Primate of all AFRICA;
Who Suffer'd
Martyrdom for the Christian Faith in
the Year of our LORD 258.

Together with
His LIFE,
Written by his own
DEACON PONTIUS.

All done into ENGLISH, from the OXFORD Edition;
And illustrated with diverse NOTES.

To which is added, A
DISSERTATION

Upon the CASE of
Heretical and Schismatical Baptisms,
At the Close of the FAMOUS
COUNCIL of CARTHAGE,

Held in the Year of our LORD 256.
Whose ACTS are also herewith publish'd.

By NATH. MARSHALL, LL. B. Rector of the united Parishes of
St. Vedast (alias Fosters) and St. Michael Le-Quern, London; and Chaplain in
Ordinary to HIS MAJESTY.

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PREFACE.

Martyrdom for the Christian Faith in

H. E. readers, it is probable, before he goes further, will expect satisfaction in a few particulars, concerning the present performance.

1. It is a translation of the translation of the Latin text of the African states, which has been taken from various sources and rules observed, and what in the whole, has been done by the translator.

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THE P R E F A C E.

THE reader, it is probable, before he goes farther, will expect satisfaction in a few particulars, concerning the present performance: e. g. *Why the world at this time of day is troubled with the translation of an antiquated father; why of a Latin father, whom they, 'tis presumed, would read in his own, who would read him in any language; why, in particular, of our African prelate, rather than of any other, whose works are extant; and lastly, what liberties have been taken, what measures and rules observed, and what, in the whole, hath been done by the translator. To each of these enquiries, the reader hath the following answers.*

i. *Why the world, at this time of day, is troubled with the translation of an antiquated father; when any little essay of wit, or of invention, would be so much more agreeable to the men of taste, the polite and delicate of our age. Yet I may have leave to hope, be the general bent of our people what it will; that all regard for religion, and for the great concerns of salvation, is not utterly lost amongst us. There is, I trust, even still a remnant left, of persons, who will be glad to know the sense of the church in her earliest and purest ages, (whilst miracles were yet vouchsafed to her,) concerning the great deposits committed to her care and custody, the principles, I mean, of the doctrine of Christ, the institutions of his apostles, the rules of his discipline, and those methods of policy and government, which obtained when the church was formed and settled, and of which the scriptural age is therefore no sufficient witness; because the holy pen-men, who composed the books of the sacred canon, had a rest from their labours, soon after they had laid the foundations of their building. They, who took up the work*
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where the apostles left it, had so much business upon their hands, and led such unsettled, ambulatory lives, that we are not to wonder, if the monuments we have from them be concise and few, and give us but imperfect notions of their belief and practice. Yet that the treasure of their valuable remains might not be concealed from the English reader, our present most reverend metropolitan hath fitted them for his use by a just and elegant translation. And I cannot but think, that our hospitality, who sincerely love religion, and would walk in the light, if they had it, might receive great advantage from a resort to the true fountains of antiquity, and from forming their principles upon those excellent models.

The sense of the scriptures is better opened by the practice which followed immediately upon their publication; than by any modern comments, which too often speak their author's prejudices, and convey to the reader no other notion, than of his scheme or system. The fathers of the first centuries might insist very properly upon the advantage of their traditions, which flowed at that time down to them in a pure and easy channel, where any foreign mixture would have been presently discerned, and an appeal would immediately have been lodged against it, in the apostolical churches; wherein the memory of every thing, which was important, was preserved a great while with all fidelity and care. Nor is it here material to object some lighter errors concerning a few points of mere speculation, such as the age of the world, the near approaches of the day of judgment, the millennium, and the age of our Saviour, when he suffer'd; in which some, or other, of the Ante-nicene fathers were notoriously mistaken. These were the particular errors of private persons: But the doctrine and discipline of the church, are things of another, of a publick nature; in which the writers of those times could not so easily be supposed to err. The points objected were matters, I say, of small moment, or consequence, to the church, or to themselves, whether they were right or wrong in them; nor can it be presumed, that equal care was used, either by the apostles themselves to convey, or by the persons, who received it from them, to preserve, the knowledge of such niceties as these, which was used by the one and by the other, in conveying and preserving the greater articles of belief and practice. For still, I say, the settlement of the christian church is not so clearly to be found in the writings of the sacred canon, as when that canon is explained by the practice of succeeding ages. Foundations are laid in the former; but the superstructure, and the finishing, are reserved to the latter.

* Translation.] Genuine epistles of the apostolical fathers, or translated.

What then? Are not the scriptures alone able to make us wise unto salvation? They doubtless are! Because an honest heart, even with small degrees of knowledge, will save the man who hath it. Yet certainly no man will carry the sufficiency of scripture so far, as to affirm, that other helps added to it are of no use to make him wiser; or that he can understand his religion as well and perfectly by his Bible alone, as with all the books in the world besides. But modern books, it may be thought, which are written in a more agreeable and engaging manner, may answer this view to all intents and purposes, and, by the approved mixture of utile dulci, may profit and please together. Here it seems not to be enough consider'd, that modern books, upon religious subjects, however, in other respects, polite and serviceable, and written by authors very conversant with antiquity, yet, will carry a taste of the fountain from which they proceed, and will taint the reader with mere modern notions. Thus learned men have variously reasoned from antiquity, upon the subject of episcopacy; according to their several byasses and prepossessions; but I cannot, for my life, believe, that, if the original evidences were open to our people, any numbers could ever be persuaded, that the first settlement of the christian church, was in the way of parity, or by teaching and ruling presbyters. When these things are taken at second hand from writers, who have espoused one side, and resolved to employ their wit and leisure in defending it; the unlearned reader is soon imposed upon, and a little byass easily perverts him. But let him peruse St. Ignatius, and our author; instead of Blondel, Salmasius, Daille, or Mr. Clarkson; and it will not be possible, that he should be so abused afterwards, without a good deal of his own consent to it.

After all; the scriptures themselves, whose sufficiency is otherwise so justly magnified, do not, and cannot, from the nature of the thing, bear testimony of themselves, but must be content to derive it from the common and ordinary attestations of other writers, who lived near the times of the scriptural authors, and quoted many passages from them, and thereby render'd it morally impossible that we should be mistaken in them. It was of vast concern to the Fathers, and it appears they judged it so, to have the will of God convey'd as clear and pure to them, as it could be; they had means of tracing the authority of those books, which are, from them, handed to us, under the names of the apostles, and inspired writers; we cannot doubt, but that they were as diligent in their enquiries upon this subject, as their professed concern for it, and the manifest importance of it, strongly claimed from them: They were men of undoubted integrity, as the course of their lives and deaths sufficiently proclaimed them: So that with the concurrence of all these motives, we accept their evidence as satisfactory, with regard to the

books of holy scripture. But supposing them to have been silent, and never to have mentioned a word of holy scripture, I still would know, what external testimony it would then have had to vouch for it, or upon what rational topics of persuasion, we could have believed, that such and such books were entitled to the authority, which we now most reasonably allow to them? And I would farther ask, whether the faith of those be not perfectly implicit, with regard to this particular, who have never once, with their own eyes, examined the proper evidences, which attest those books, and which render the belief of their authority a reasonable persuasion. So unhappy are some people in extolling the sufficiency of scripture, to the utter neglect and disparagement of its proper vouchers! I mean not here to deny, nor to depreciate, the value of its internal evidence: But internal and external do best together, and whereas the former requires a good deal of exact and critical observation, to make a man judge it, the latter is an argument which every man, who reads it, may easily comprehend, and so is calculated for more general use. Every man who reads any book of holy scripture, quoted by a father, who lived near the times of its author, and who could resort to the very original copy left by such author, in some, or other, of the churches, founded by the apostles, must thence infer the reasonableness of believing such a book to be the author's, whom such a father ascribes it to: He may thence assure himself, that the book is no imposture of later times; but that there is really better evidence for its authority, than for any other book in the world, written so long ago.

Particular texts of scripture are indeed interpreted by the fathers after a manner, which to us, at this distance, seems uncouth and singular. This I have endeavoured to account for in diverse notes upon my author. But I would desire it may be considered, that their conclusions may be right, when their reasonings are not so; and that their opinions may be true, when their logick fails them. Religious and physiological enquiries are thus far parallel, that they have come nearest to the truth in both of them, who have least departed from tradition, to follow their own uncertain speculations. And accordingly Orpheus and Hesiod, who only told their story of the world's original in metre, had more at bottom of philosophical truth, than any of the more modern speculators, who pretended to philosophize upon that subject, and to adorn their discourse with the usual embellishments of art and invention. And thus it was anciently with religious questions. What Christ propounded to his apostles, and his apostles to the churches founded by them, was

Original copy. So Tertullian, our author's great master, hath asserted, as a well known fact, in his book against heretics, ch. 28. *Age idem in ecclesia declarata apostolica* — *apud quas ipsa authentica scriptura eorum retineatur*, *Joannis dicim*, *et ipsorum scripturae sunt scripturae*.

the grand decider of them. This was the short way taken by Tertullian with his adversaries. The sense of scripture they would dispute with him; they had their quibbles and evasions for all sorts of arguments; so he was for bringing them to fact; what was the known and avowed doctrine of the apostolick churches; and fact was too stubborn to yield to any subtilties of discourse and reasoning. This, in times so near the fountain of evangelical truth, was a proper test of it. Two or three generations might band it easily to each other. But the case is now much altered; and the word tradition (because it hath been misapplied by the Romanists to very ill purposes) is become exceedingly formidable to English ears; so that I shall be obliged a little to explain myself, as to what I have said upon it. They (the Romanists) insist upon the tradition of the present church, as their rule; whereas, tho' the church might be able to preserve her traditions uncorrupt from father, suppose, to son or grandson, i. e. for two or three generations; yet it is not so credible, she should do it for thirteen, fourteen, or twenty generations. In the patriarchal times, there was a great and general defection from the purity of divine worship, notwithstanding the longevity of the patriarchs, and the easier conveyance of traditional truths, which became thence more practicable than it was in succeeding ages; and yet we may observe the mischiefs which, even then, arose in practice, from the want of a written law. In like manner we may observe the corruptions which have crept into the christian worship; not indeed from the want of a written law, but from the neglect of it, and from the greater regard which hath been paid to the traditions of the present church. This, however, hinders not, but that the traditions of the ancient church, whilst she was not far removed from the apostolick age, and had the continuance of miracles vouchsafed to her, may be very valuable, where-ever we can find

Tertullianus, Ha heresis (falsitas) non recipit quidam scripturas; & si quas recipit, adjectionibus & detractionibus, ad dispositionem institui sui intervertit; & si scripturae integrae, & si aliquatenus integrae praesint, nihilominus diversas expositiones commentata intervertit. In lib. advers. Haetic. c. 17. And a little farther in ch. 19. Ordo rerum desideratur, ut prius proponatur quod minus solent disputandum esse, quibus competat fides ipsa; cuius sunt scripturae; a quo, & per quos, & quando, & quibus sit tradita disciplina, qua sunt christiani. Ubi enim apparetur esse veritatem disciplinam & fides christiana, illic erit veritas scripturarum, & expositionum, & omnium traditionum christianarum. Earthen yet in ch. 22. ibid. Denique promittit omnem doctrinam qua cum illis ecclesiis apostolicis tradita est & originalibus fidei conspiret, veritate deputandam, id sine dubio tenentem, quae recte ab apostolis, apostoli a Christo, Christus a Deo suscepit. Reliquam vero omnem doctrinam de mendacio praedicandam, qua sapiat contra veritatem ecclesiarum, & apostolorum, & Christi, & Dei. Onse mores in cap. 24. ibid. Ita namque omnes erroribus, & peccatis sit, & apostolus de testimonio reddendo quibusdam; nullam respexit Spiritus Sanctus uti eam in veritatem tradidit; sed hoc magis a Christo, ad hoc singulariter de Romano, ut esset veritas; neglexerit officium Dei vicarius, Christi vicarius, sinens ecclesias aliter interire, qualligere, aliter credere, quam ipse per apostolos praedicabat. Requid veritatem est, ut sit de tanta in tanta fidem erraverint? Nullus inter multos eventus est unum exitum. Variasse debuerat error doctrina ecclesiarum. Ceterum quod apud multos unum invenitur, non est erratum, sed traditum. Where the identity, or sameness, of belief among all churches, is appealed to, in proof of the doctrine, which were so supported. And Irenaeus before him had said, that heretics were the persons, who rejected tradition: Unusquisque enim ipsorum (viz. haeticorum) omnimodo pervertit sensum ipsum, regulam veritatis depravat, praedicare non confunditur. Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem, qua est ab apostolis, qua per successiones presbyterorum in ecclesiis custoditur, nos provocamus, adversantur traditioni. In lib. 3. c. 2. and ibid. c. 3. Traditionem itaque apostolorum in tota mundo manifestatam in omni ecclesia adeo perspicua promittit, qui vera voluit audire.

them; valuable, (I say,) not in opposition to scripture, but in conjunction with, and as a comment on it. These traditions now are no where extant, but in broken fragments, scattered up and down, amongst the fathers of the first centuries. There certainly, if any where, we may expect to meet with them. The opinions of the church, as well as her practices, are reducible to facts, of which the persons, who lived in those earlier ages, were certainly good and authentick witnesses. They might easily know, what was of such a publick nature; and they frequently appeal to the doctrines of the church, as to undoubted facts; that the church all along had been known to hold them, and that the notoriety of the thing left no room for a dispute. Now if we at this distance can come at any reasonable assurance of what was the current doctrine, discipline, or government of the church, in her earliest and purest ages, whilst miracles were still vouchsafed to her, and whilst the same Holy Spirit which planted, continued to water, her after an extraordinary manner; a great point will hence be gained towards establishing religion upon its proper basis, and towards retrieving the memory of many important truths, which have hitherto met with too little regard and notice.

The disputes, which have severally been started upon the sense of antiquity in diverse articles of moment, are no better objections against enquiring into it, than the disputes, which have arisen upon the interpretation of holy scripture, are arguments to discourage us from looking into the sacred canon. Nor is the manner of writing, used by these venerable authors, any just diminution of the credit due to them. The scriptures themselves are not read for any extraordinary elegances of style, or height of eloquence, which are to be found in them, more than in any other writings; but for the weight of the matters contained in them, and for the great interest we have thereupon depending. Now these very matters are more at large explained, and deduced to us in the writers of truly primitive antiquity; whose want of delicacy and the modern turn, is amply compensated by an abundance of integrity, and by a pure uninterested conveyance of useful truths to us. What the scriptures have drawn in miniature, the fathers have represented in the just proportions of life; and if, for any supposed defect of oratory, or reasoning, we will go on to neglect these valuable treasures; we may boast, if we please, of our taste and relish; but our regard to religion, will be very questionable. Whatever commendations may be due to some of these ancient writers for eloquence or learning; to Tertullian, e. g. for his sarcastical and pointed wit; to Origen, or Clement Alexandrinus, for the infinity of their reading, and the strength of their judgment; yet I cannot but think, that these are improper topics, whereupon to celebrate their pious labours. The simplicity

of the gospel, and the sincerity wherewith they have opened and conveyed to us the whole scheme of its sacred institutions, are their peculiar endowments. Whether they were, or were not, men of the most searching judgment, the most flowing eloquence, or the finest wit, is not material to their character, as witnesses and guardians of the truths committed to them. If they are found faithful in this point, and have truly represented, what required no mighty talents to represent it truly; we gain from them what is more considerable, than any elegancies of dress and ornament, or any amusements, which might entertain a reader more nice than wise, and more curious than pious. And yet after all, I will venture to tell our great admirers of fine thought and diction, that, considering the times they lived in, even the eloquence of the fathers was by no means contemptible. The great design of that talent is agreed to be persuading: He, who uses means which are best fitted to that end, is master of the truest rhetoric. Now if we judge of their eloquence by this rule, it will stand entitled to the highest applauses; and may vie with that of Cicero, or Demosthenes, in its known effects. Those renowned masters could not boast of more success and efficacy, than what attended the discourses and writings of our ecclesiastick orators. Their address and skill were equal to the work they had for them; and their people hung upon their lips and pens, with an attention and reverence, equal to any paid by the Athenians or the Romans to their enchanting demagogues. Wherefore tho' we dwell not much upon this topick of commendation, because it is not the peculiar nor proper praise of our venerable authors; yet it was fit to mention it, were it only to shew, that we do not quit claim to it.

But the lineaments of apostolical belief and practice, with the original settlements of the christian church, which are so fairly legible in their writings, are the particulars which we most highly prize in them. Hence we may furnish our selves with defensive armour against all the adversaries of our ecclesiastical constitution, from whatsoever quarter they attack us. Here the Romanist, with all his boasted pretences to antiquity, will find himself a very modern. The Sectarian will perceive that he is but of yesterday; a very mushroom, produced at the first dawn of a reformation-sun, after a long night of ignorance and superstition; of which it is wonderful that it did not rot off immediately from the ground, whence it derived its birth, before that sun attained one half of its meridian height. The race of men, who, by a prodigious abuse of words, claim to themselves the peculiar privilege of thinking freely, may hence observe, that where they flatter themselves to be the authors, they are only the revivers; that what Christ dictated to his apostles,

See the foregoing citation from Tertullian, advers. heres. c. 21.

and his apostles to their several churches, stands full in their face; and hath condemned their opinions, long before their persons were ever heard of. They, who extol the natural, at the expence of an instituted religion, may think the pains exceedingly mispent, which are laid out upon searching into the several parts, and circumstances, and modifications, of a scheme, the whole of which they consider as little worth their notice. They value not, as they ought, the importance of keeping men within the enclosure of institutions; that the wisdom of God thought fit to distinguish, very early, the people whom he chose to be his inheritance, by a peculiar cognisance in their flesh; and, when upon trial made of it, that single distinction was found insufficient to answer the intention; farther restraints, observances, and ceremonies, were added to it; and all together made up a great and burthensome body of ritual laws. A relief was intended by the christian scheme, as to this particular; the ceremonial part was considerably lessened, and reduced upon the matter, very near to the patriarchal model. But there never was a time, nor state of religion, without somewhat of express and positive institution; where it hath not been in reality, it hath been always overdone in pretence; and where religion hath not received some outward attire and cloathing, from the hand of God; the hand of man hath ever been too officious; and, under the colour of keeping it warm, and covering its nakedness, hath really choked and stifled it. So that the ritual and instituted parts of religion, have a just measure of esteem and value due to them, subordinate, it is confessed, to the higher views of the moral law, but by no means to be slighted as useless, or superfluous. God himself, who always, we are sure, knew what was in man, and fittest for him, hath, upon all occasions, declared a most particular regard to his own institutions. He foresaw there would be those, who, in the abundance of their own sense, would set at naught his wisdom, and break in upon the fences, wherewith he hath judged it expedient to guard and to enclose his little flock. But they, who view the gospel in its proper light, and consider it, not only as a revival of the natural law, but as improving upon, and adding to it, and securing it moreover by due preservatives, will entertain a becoming reverence for those preservatives; and, as they are not discoverable by the mere light of reason, such enquirers will look for them where they are to be found; first, in the writings of the apostles, and evangelists; and next, in the earliest records of the primitive church. And I will venture to affirm, that, without bringing his religion under this examen, no man will have a full or adequate idea of it. I do not say, it is necessary, that all men should have such a comprehensive knowledge of it; but they, who can have it, should certainly think it worth their while to obtain it. And I can resolve, the neglect of fetching this know-
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ledge from its proper fountains, into no other reasons, than such as will highly disparage those who are guilty of it. Either they apprehend the gospel, as a revealed institution and scheme of worship, to be a thing of no great moment; and so, that a very exact study of it, will scarce quit the cost; or else they are afraid of meeting with some contradiction in it to their declared sentiments and practices; and that modern opinions will find too little countenance from ancient principles. Or, finally, they prefer pleasure before profit, and delicacy before use; and so would rather amuse themselves with a Montagne or St. Evremont, than inform themselves from a St. Ignatius or St. Cyprian.

I easily foresee a question or two, which will be put to me, upon the recommendation I have here been so bold to give of the fathers, and the use of them; e. g. Do I expect the revival of those customs, which they delineate; or do I think it practicable, after so long a desuetude, and such an utter ignorance, and neglect of them, as have generally prevailed in these latter ages? Do I censure those particular establishments, as corrupt and faulty members of the catholic church; which retain few or none of the usages, hence appearing to have obtained in the earlier settlements of the gospel? Do I make no allowances for a church incorporated with the state, and necessarily thence restrained in the exercise of discipline, and all outward jurisdiction? To all which, as briefly as may be, I reply; that I have no such expectations, as the queries hint at, and in most of the circumstances concerning the outward regimen of the church, I am perfectly of Tertullian's mind; that, where the great points of doctrine are secured, those of discipline may be altered. But then I cannot help wishing, that they had what he calls, novitatem correctionis, a change for the better. Yet if this cannot be had, we must wait the good providence of God, and keep what we have, with all diligence and fidelity. We have some advantages from the incorporation of the state with the church, which our primitive fathers wanted: And if we should have some disadvantages mixed with them; these are what we may well expect, from the imperfections of our present condition; which seldom suffers any privilege to be conveyed entire to us, without some alloy in it. But tho' we may submit many things, where the remedy against them is not to be had, without inconveniences, which would more than balance it; there can be no harm in looking towards the fountain, nor in observing the streams, where they flowed the purest. The better they are known, the more willingness there may be in our people to return to them, and the more readiness in those to assist and forward them, without whose concurrence nothing can be done de-

Tertullian. De veland. virgin. c. 1.

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cently, nor in order. It is the glory of our English church, and what she often boasts of, that she is the nearest of any now in the christian world, to the primitive model: It is not, I presume, denied, that she might be nearer still; and, if her glory be great, for being so near; it would certainly be greater, if she, yet, were nearer. It is not, however, the province of persons in a private sphere, to obtrude any thing of this nature, when we are already so well, and have such ample matter of thanksgiving to God, for the preservation of his doctrine, so pure and uncorrupt, amongst us; and for those remnants of ancient discipline, which, tho' not in all cases absolutely necessary, must at last be acknowledged to be highly expedient; for tho' a church may possibly subsist without them, yet it cannot subsist in health, nor vigour, nor spread its reputation beyond its own walls. Even in that important point of a regular succession, which, with the primitive fathers, was the characteristic of a true church, upon any doubt or controversy; there may possibly have been some breaks and failures: To these, when secret, no human remedy was applicable; tho', by the way, where-ever the succession was known to be broken, it was always repaired; and no church, notoriously destitute of it, was acknowledged, for the first fifteen hundred years, till she returned into the ancient channel of apostolick government. But if there be now any churches, in which these failures are truly unavoidable, and these breaches irreparable; a real necessity, we doubt not, will excuse, what choice would render exceedingly and highly criminal. This allowance we have even from the famous Mr. Dodwell, That where there are such violences upon the [ecclesiastical] government, as make a breach in the due succession, and affect the direct conveyances of that authority from God, which is requisite for giving a title to those spiritual benefits to souls, which are the great designs of ecclesiastical communion; ----- there will be reason to believe, that God, who judges himself as much obliged by the equity of his covenants, as men usually think themselves obliged by the letter of theirs, will perform what his covenant would, in equity, oblige him to perform, notwithstanding any such failures on mans part, as are unavoidable to truly, diligent, and pious communicants.

2. But now, tho' from what hath been urged upon this occasion, or from any other topics, it should be agreed in general, that a resort to the Fathers hath many signal uses; yet I am still accountable to my reader for presenting him with the translation of a Latin father, whom they (it is presumed) would read in his own,

who would read him in any language. To which I reply; that if this were a just objection, it would go a great way towards rendering the translation of any father, whether Greek, or Latin, absolutely needless; since whoever can read Latin, may easily come at the sense of the Greek fathers, by the help of the Latin page, which is set against the Greek in most editions of them. If I had consulted my own ease in an undertaking of this sort; I had certainly chosen the translation of almost any Greek author, rather than of an African writer. And indeed the Greek, as a more plain and simple language, and having less of idiom and phraseology, than the Latin, gives less trouble to a translator, who understands the grammar of either. But the Latin of Africa, at the distance of about two hundred and fifty years from the Augustan age, with very little entertainment, will create a good deal of perplexity, even to readers best acquainted with the language. So that I cannot apprehend much weight in this objection. And if, next to a perusal of the sacred scriptures, a perusal of the earliest fathers contributes the largest assistances to a right understanding of our holy religion; then, next to a translation of those scriptures, a translation of these fathers, seems to promise the greatest advantages; and neither of them should be grudged, or withheld from, the English reader. Nay, even scholars themselves of the lower form, who do not read Latin with perfect ease and pleasure, nor enter, without difficulty, into the spirit of an author, and perhaps are utterly unacquainted with the African dialect, may find, it is hoped, their use, and their account, in the translation of this venerable father. And indeed, when almost every man amongst us professeth to understand his religion, as well as any man, and when appeals from the press are daily crowded upon the English reader, concerning the very highest and most important articles of our faith; it seems very reasonable and expedient, that he should be furnished with all fit lights and mediums, for enabling him to form his judgment upon the surest and best foundations.

When the sense of scripture is disputed, upon any article of moment; it cannot but be of consequence to know, what the churches thought of it, which had the presence and conversation of the apostles to set them right in any mistaken construction of their doctrine, whether delivered to them by word, or writing. Their unanimity in such articles, during the three first ages, and their care to prevent innovations, or to bear testimony against them, when they could not be prevented, are considerable arguments in favour of the truths, which were so preserved by them. And the writers, who lived within that period, are very full and competent witnesses to us of their sentiments; and their integrity in reporting them, is instead of a thousand other excellencies. Besides, their age was not wholly destitute of inspiration from God, which renders it exceedingly

incredible, that any great or enormous error, should generally prevail in their churches; and indeed the bishops of those times were amazingly diligent in guarding against all attempts upon their sacred depositum; and met together in very unfavourable seasons, and in considerable numbers, that they might with united forces consult the interests of the flock committed, and hold fast the form of sound words, which had been delivered, to them, from the fountain. It is true, when all the helps, which can be procured, are amassed together, room will still be left, for mistake and misconstruction; and, as we differ often about the sense of scripture, so, we may differ about the sense of the fathers, or of any other writers whatsoever. But what then is the consequence of this observation? Shall we read no authors, because we may mistake them; because they have not delivered their sense in such a manner, that there is no possibility of missing it? Certainly this were a wild conclusion! Honesty and diligence in the use of such means as are open to us, would be far better inferences, from the confessed possibility of error, than abandoning our selves to despair and negligence. Wherefore, when our people are exhorted to prove all things, and many grow fond of complying with our advice, and are even ready to run before it; methinks they should be furnished with proper assistances, for judging upon the appeals, which are so frequently addressed to them, and which they are as forward to receive, as any can be to lodge them. With these views, I have prepared for the English reader, and for such others, as shall think fit to peruse it, the translation of a Latin father; which, I need not tell them, hath cost me much time, and labour, with little prospect to my self, besides their advantage. For every one knows, that, in this sort of performances, the praise (where there is any) accrues to the author, and the blame to the translator. But if any numbers shall hence be induced to acquaint themselves farther than they would otherwise have done, with the belief and practice of the church, in one of her purest ages; I have my end; and shall be content with such fate, or censure, as shall happen to be my portion.

And now having given my reasons for troubling the world, at this time of day, with the translation of an antiquated father; and apologized for my choice of a Latin one; the next enquiry to be answered, will be, Why, I fixed upon St. Cyprian in particular? Of which the true account is, that I knew of none more useful; none, who would convey to the reader a more comprehensive view of the times he lived in; and of the various affairs, which were brought before him. Our author was the bishop of a most flourishing church, the metropolis of a province; he was a man, who was made for business, had a diligent and active spirit, and talents equal

equal to the charge wherewith he was entrusted. His personal reputation drew a great resort to him, especially from the western bishops, for his advice and encouragement, what to do, and how to behave themselves upon diverse emergencies. And his answers to such applications as were made to him in these conjunctures, open to the reader a clearer notion of church-principles and practices, than any which can be derived from all the fathers besides put together. The time he lived in was a busy one, and he was at the head of most transactions in it. The case of schism, the penance and reconciliation of the lapsed, the debate upon heretical and schismatical baptisms, and the contests for the see of Rome, were (all of them) extraordinary incidents, which distinguished our author's age and his episcopate; as his agency in them signalized his person; and the writings which remain concerning them, have drawn out the lineaments of the ancient church, with great advantage and perspicuity. One hundred and fifty years had not passed from the death of one of the apostles, when he entered upon his see; and the churches of Christ were then particularly careful to preserve the memory and observance of all apostolical institutions; and had certainly better means at that time of knowing what those institutions were, than any which are now within reach of the most curious enquirer. The short hints and glances which we find in scripture, were then improved, explained and opened, by the successive practice of the church, from her first formation, and her practice could easily be traced upwards from that time to the very fountain; and when her bishops were so watchful, and so well united for mutual defence and counsel; it was next to impossible, that any material innovation upon her doctrine, discipline, or worship, should creep in unobserved, or not be repulsed upon its first attempts. There was then no temptation from secular views, to taint her purity in any of these particulars. Frequent persecutions reminded all her pastors of their duty; and the powers of the world, had not yet either protected, or corrupted her. But what above all demands our reverence for this truly venerable period, and must convince us, that no error of high importance could be generally received in it, is the continuance of miracles, which was hitherto vouchsafed, tho' in more scanty measures, and in fewer instances, than whilst the church stood more in need of them, as being more destitute of human evidences. Of these extraordinary vouchsafements our author had his share, and hath transmitted to us, what, we have no reason to doubt, was, a faithful account of them in the case of others. And all the many eminent and signal advantages which have been here recounted, as belonging to his age, are consigned, in some degree to the use of ours, by his rescuing them from oblivion, and preserving them in the durable records of his tracts and epistles. The age of Tertul-
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lian had not near the business in it; nor was he a person, whose station qualified him to make such a figure in it, as our author made: Nor had he such cotemporaries, as Dionysius Alexandrinus, Firmilian; Fabian, Cornelius, and Lucius, bishops of Rome, and martyrs; the first of whom was miraculously promoted to his see: I might add, Alexander of Jerusalem, Origen, and Gregory Thaumaturgus, who lived about this time, but were too remote from our author to hold any correspondence with him: Yet all contributed to enlighten the age, tho' they had no such business upon their hands, as happened to engage our African prelate; the accounts of which, by him transmitted to us, have (I say) much illustrated the principles and the practices of that famous century. Of the fathers, who lived before him; those, which are called apostolical, were long ago presented to the English reader, by our most reverend and learned metropolitan. The apologies of Justin Martyr and Tertullian, (which are the best of their works,) together with the Octavius of Minucius Felix, have been more lately published in an excellent translation by the reverend Mr. Reeves. The business of Irenæus lay most with hereticks, who are now scarce known; and therefore a translation of him had hardly quitted cost. Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen, were men of various and prodigious learning; but the perusal of their works is fitter for professed scholars, than for an English reader. Nor will all these together (I can affirm upon certain grounds) give him so true a taste of the primitive church, nor so full a notion of her usages and laws, as he may collect from St. Cyprian singly. So that, if I would translate any father of the three first centuries, not yet translated; I had no choice before me, where there was no comparison; but our archbishop of Carthage must carry it from all the rest.

After so much said of him, I may be thought too partial to his interests, to give his just character; which therefore I shall chuse to lay before my reader in the words of the celebrated Dupin. St. Cyprian (saith he) is "the first of the christian writers, who was truly eloquent, as Lactantius hath observed; and we may say, that there hath never been another since him, if we except Lactantius, who was master of so much true, and noble, and genuine eloquence. He professed rhetorick with mighty reputation, before he was converted to christianity; and what he writ afterwards is admirable in its kind. For, as Lactantius adds, "He had an easy, fertile, agreeable invention; and, what is "more, a spirit of perspicuity reigns throughout all his works; "which is one of the best qualities belonging to any discourse.

a The first.] Here it is observed, in the margin of the English edition of Dupin, that this can only be meant of the Latin.

“He hath a great deal of ornament in his narration, an easy turn in his expressions, and force and vigour in his reasonings, in such a manner, that he had all the three talents required in an orator, which are to please, to teach, and to persuade. And it is not easy to say, which of these three he possesseth in the most eminent degree.” As St. *Jerom* said, that his discourse resembled a fountain of pure water, having a sweet and gentle stream; so we may say, that it doth likewise very often resemble an impetuous torrent, which carries away with it every thing it meets; since he was capable of raising what passions he pleased, and of persuading us to do, whatever he had a mind to, whether he gives consolation, or whether he exhorts, or dissuades, he doth it with so much force, that one cannot possibly avoid being sensibly comforted, or encouraged, or deterred by what he says. His eloquence is natural, and far removed from the style of a declaimer. There is no insipid mean railery, no common proverbs; in short, nothing which hath the tincture of ordinary literature in his writings; but the christian and the bishop speak all along. A man may see that his tongue spoke out of the abundance of his heart; and that, as he had searched into the deepest christian truths, so he expressed them nobly and generously: Tho’ we must at the same time own, that after all his endeavours to speak as distinctly and purely as was possible; there is something of the *African* genius in him, and he could not forbear, now and then, to intermix some harsh terms. So difficult a matter is it to vanquish nature, or to abstain from those words we daily hear from those with whom we converse.

4. My part in this work hath been conveying the sense of my author to the English reader, in words as expressive of it, as I could find for the purpose. But I presume it is not expected, that I should confine my self to a literal version, or to a scrupulous exactness in rendering him word for word. Had I done so, my English (bad as it still may be) had been much worse, and even insupportable. I have therefore ventured, now and then, upon a paraphrastical construction, where the original would least endure a closter translation. The reader, I hope, will no where find cause of complaint against me, for any liberties of this sort, which I have never taken, but with a view of giving him my author’s sense to greater advantage. I trust I have not mistaken it, in any circumstance of moment. Where ever I have been doubtful, I have usually advertized my doubt in the notes; so that the reader may be upon his guard, and prepared, if he pleases, for a farther examination. I know not whether it be worth while to take notice of one particular liberty, which I have taken, viz. of prefixing the title of saint to the several apostles and evangelists, as they occur in our author,

tho' he himself hath named them simply and plainly, without any such appellation. The truth of it is; those titles flowed unawares from my pen; as having always been accustomed to mention their names with those marks of honour; which, at lowest, are innocent, and anciently were given to all christians, as saints, or holy in profession, and presumed to be so in practice too. But in the degeneracy of latter ages, the title hath usually been confined to persons of distinction, such as apostles, evangelists, and the martyrs of the primitive church. I have here and there also expressed my author's sense in the language of holy scripture, where he, himself, did not mean to quote it. But then, in such cases, I never refer to the passage, in the margin, as I always do, where he particularly cites any verse or chapter of the inspired writers.

After the account which the reader hath had of my version; the arguments and introductions to the several tracts and epistles, with the notes upon the whole work, are next to be deduced to him. I have chosen, for his greater ease, to prefix the arguments and introductions to the head of each epistle, or tract, they belong to; rather than to follow the order of the Oxford edition, which hath put them altogether in the way of annals, and separated them from the body of the work. The substance of them however is taken out of those annals, or else out of Pamelius, as I saw reason to follow the one or the other. The notes are formed either upon such observations, as occurred to my own mind in the course of the performance, and were the results of my former reading; or else are borrowed from the united labours of bishop Fell, Rigaltius, Pamelius, and Mr. Dodwell's Cyprianic dissertations; and, whenever I could think of it, I have subjoined to each note, the name of the author from whom it was borrowed: But as I may not perhaps have been exact in this particular, I give this general notice, that the reader may not apprehend I design imposing upon him another's observations for my own. Indeed it very often happened, that I had occasion of adding to a note of bishop Fell, Rigaltius, &c. somewhat of my own observation, and to blend them together. And then it was not worth while to be very nice in distinguishing, which was which; tho' I have now and then, where it could well or easily be done, descended even to this particularity.

In a work of this length, some readers, perhaps, who care not to go thro' the whole, may desire a direction to the most useful parts of it. Some points of doctrine are every where interspersed, throughout the main body of our author's works. So that somewhat of this kind, the reader will be sure to miss of, by omitting any part of them. But, I conceive, that the two first treatises, as they stand in this edition, may be passed over with as little detriment as any. And the three books of Testimonies, which follow, are chiefly valuable

valuable for preserving such authentick evidence, as they give, of the several scriptures which are cited in them; and which the reader, if he be much in haste, may observe, at one view, in the Index. The tracts which are next in order, are the Unity of the Church, and the Case of the Lapsed; and these are the most valuable pieces in the first part of our author's works. The second contains his Epistles; which, all together, give us so clear and full a description of church-principles and practices, in that pure and early century, that I wish them in every hand and heart, which would form themselves upon the most excellent models. I would not, willingly, be understood to mean a reflection any where; yet I cannot, upon this occasion, forbear observing; that if some able reasoners, in our profession, had been careful to furnish themselves with the proper lights and mediums, whereupon to found and to support their reasonings; their celebrated labours would have appeared in the world with fewer blemishes, and at more advantage: They would less have contemned the outworks of christianity; if they had known or considered, how well those outworks defended its very vitals in the time of danger.

At the close of the council of Carthage, which is a choice piece of antiquity, and the first synod, whose acts are conveyed entire to us; I have added a dissertation, upon the case of heretical and schismatical baptisms. I assure my reader, that I entered upon that enquiry with prepossessions in favour of a different side of the question, from that, which the mighty force of truth and evidence obliged me afterwards to follow. But I think at last the difference is merely speculative, between those who agree in this practical conclusion; that the resort must be to the church, for an effectual and saving baptism; tho' out of it, it may so be given, that, upon coming into the church, the person, who hath received it, needs not have it repeated. They, who insist, that the church hath no power to confirm such a baptism, without repeating it, differ, I say, from the former, in a circumstance, which is, at present, of no great importance. For till we have gained the point we agree in, that people, who have received their baptism out of the church, shall submit to a solemn confirmation of it from the church, before they are admitted to the privilege of her communion; it will be to no purpose, to insist upon higher terms, when even the lower, for ought I see, are not likely to be accepted.

I once intended to have prefixed Dr. Cave's life of St. Cyprian before this translation of his works: But as they, whose leave for doing so was necessary, were stiff in granting it; I thought it not worth while to be obliged to them, nor yet to write another, whilst that is extant. Instead of it, I have chosen to translate his life, which was written by his own deacon Pontius, who accompanied him

him in his retirement. And tho' it be, by no means, written with exactness, nor according to the just rules of biography, the narration of which should be plain and simple, whereas the style of Pontius is swelling and declamatory, and his manner rather panegyric than historical; yet, considering, that the life is extant in Dr. Cave, and that the main incidents of it will be found in the course of his works; considering also, that the performance of Pontius, how defective soever it may be in other particulars, hath the advantage of his personal acquaintance with St. Cyprian, which renders what he saith of him the more authentick; I have, upon the whole, preferred a version of what Pontius hath written concerning our author, before any other account of him, which I might, with more ease to my self, have laid before my reader.

Perhaps it will be expected from me to apologize for my frequent references, in the course of this work, to a treatise, which I published some time ago, without a name to it, concerning the penitential discipline of the primitive church: Now my true and only reason for thus referring to it, was to save the trouble of enlarging farther upon subjects, which are there professedly handled, and which could not so well be deduced, to their proper length, within the necessary brevity of notes. And, indeed, I found work enough in this undertaking, to make me desirous of cutting off all occasions, which might swell it to a farther bulk.

I am the more willing to acknowledge my self the author of that treatise, because I have heard some objections against it, as extending the authority of the priestly function beyond its proper bounds; and I never meant, by the concealment of my name, to screen my person from any censure, which I should be thought to deserve. But I must needs take notice, that there is a sort of writers in the world, whose reproaches are the best commendations I could ever hope for; who, since they seem so little acquainted with the sacerdotal office, shall here be told, what, I fear, they are willingly ignorant of, that the priest hath, in all religions, been acknowledged as an intercessor with God for his people, and as a person appointed to bless in his name; to preside in the solemn offices of divine worship, and to be the medium of conveying the people's prayers to the throne of grace. There is no doubt, but that personal qualifications are required in those, to whom his agency, in any of these particulars, shall be finally serviceable. They must be furnished with suitable dispositions; which yet will not obtain for them the favour of God, without a resort to his ordinances and institutions; now these are to be conveyed to them, thro' the ministry of man; and yet, tho' the ministry of man be necessary, it is not alone sufficient for their purpose. The ordinance, when thus conveyed to the recipient, will not, I mean, operate in the way of charm,

charm, nor procure any saving benefits to the person, who doth not take care to qualify himself in a proper manner, and to bring with him the wedding-garment. So that I see not what it is which some men start at in this argument; except they would grow into consideration, by fighting valiantly with their own shadows, and by raising difficulties upon the misrepresented sense of their supposed adversaries. What do they think we mean, by authoritative intercession? We assert it truly in no other construction than this, which primitive christianity thought always very innocent; that the priest hath authority and commission from God, to pronounce his benedictions; and to be, as I said, the medium, thro' whose mouth the prayers of the people shall ascend to heaven. The act therefore, whereby he doth this, is an authoritative, commissioned, act; as having the commission and authority of God, to warrant and to vouch for it. He is ordained for men in things pertaining to God; and this is an honour which no man taketh to himself, but he, who is mediate, or immediately, called of God. Even Christ, the Son of God, did not thus glorify himself; but he who said unto him, Thou art a priest for ever. After our first and great high-priest, others were sent forth by his authority, and they sent others after them; and their commission was to last to the world's end; even till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Where, at last, then can be the harm of representing any act of theirs, which they shall perform in virtue of their office, (to which they are called of God, and commissioned by him to perform it, of representing it, I say,) as an authoritative act; be it, that of intercession for blessing, or pardon, to their people; of applying to them the seals of the covenant, or of publishing and declaring ex officio, the terms of peace and reconciliation? In each of these ministrations, I still assert, the part of the priest to be authoritative; inasmuch as he hath authority from God to perform it. But then this authority was never intended to represent God, as being laid under any other obligation by it, than what he hath been pleased to lay himself under, by his own free act, in declaring, that, upon such and such conditions, he will be gracious to a sinful people. The publication of this general pardon, and of the terms whereupon it is suspended, he first committed to Christ, thence to his apostles, and, after them, to their successors, who have handed this commission from one to another, ever since the first delivery of the gospel, down to our present times. Every man, who is capable, may, for himself, indeed consider the contents, and make what use he can of it; and yet none but an authorized herald hath the proper powers for proclaiming it. The first of our order had miraculous powers to support

Heb. 5. 1,
c.

Mat. 28. 20.
Ephes. 4. 13.

them, in the extraordinary parts of their office; but as long as there shall remain any spiritual wants to be supplied, any saints to be perfected, or any body of Christ to be edified, i. e. indeed as long, as the world shall endure; so long the work of the ministry will have its ordinary and proper uses. And why the offices of intercession and benediction should be excluded from being parts of this work, (which have been parts of it in all religions, and parts of it hitherto in ours,) no reason hath yet been offered; tho' of railing and reviling, we have had more than a sufficient measure. In the patriarchal state, Abraham, by virtue of his prophetick office, *Ephes. 4. 12.* prayed for Abimelech; as the same Abraham had been blessed before by Melchisedeck, in virtue of Melchisedeck's priestly function. *Genes. 26. 7.* Did all depend here upon personal qualifications; or were personal qualifications joined with the agency of the priest and prophet, in order to derive the blessing and pardon of God? Certainly the latter was the truth of both those cases! And why may it not be so in the christian priesthood? In the declarative absolution, which follows the general confession of our liturgy, the priest authoritatively (by which I mean in virtue of his office) pronounces the terms, whereupon God is willing to pardon his offending creatures, viz. upon their faith and repentance. The people, on their parts, must be careful to come within these conditions; and then this solemn pronunciation hath its comfortable uses, to support them under their sense of guilt, and to quicken them in their future progress. In our communion office, the general confession is followed, with the priest's intercession for the people's pardon, which here again I call authoritative, because it is an act resulting from his commission, so to pray for them; and yet, they must, for themselves, be careful to throw in no impediment, but in all things to come within the terms of acceptance. It was very expedient, in the reason and nature of the thing, that there should be an order of men set apart to these employments; to study the will of God concerning the salvation of men, more perfectly than others; and thence to declare it to the ignorant, to remind the careless, to comfort the desolate, and desponding, as well as to threaten the obstinate and presumptuous. What others, who are capable, may do of this kind occasionally, and in the way of charity, differs much from what is done by the proper persons in the ordinary course of office and duty; even as much as the opinion of a private person happening to be acquainted with our laws, differs from the sentence of a lower court, when yet such sentence is agreed to be repealable in an higher; or as much as the conversation of diverse offenders with each other, concerning the terms whereupon their sovereign will admit them to forgiveness, differs from the proclamation published by an herald. One may be as true, as the other; but not so authentick. The christian priesthood

priesthood may well and safely, therefore, be allowed its appropriate acts and offices, founded on the will of God, who may fairly be supposed, without absurdity, to have fenced it in with all fit enclosures; and to have intended its honour, by securing it from the profanations of unauthorized invaders. This is no way misbecoming an instituted religion, nor the wisdom of God its founder.

In the treatise which hath occasioned these remarks, I thought I might have appeased the wrath of some angry people, by giving up the point of authoritative absolution, in the inner court, (in foro conscientia,) tho' I can assure them, I gave it up for no other reason, but because I clearly saw, that, in the sense wherein it imagined it to be usually opposed, it was not tenable: Not but that I apprehend the absolutions in our liturgy to be authoritative, in the sense which hath here been given of that very offensive word; viz. as they are acts of office warranted by God, and pursuant to the commission, which the priest hath received, for publishing authoritatively the terms of pardon at large, and in general; and then for pronouncing, by the same authority, that, when those terms are fulfilled, the pardon is granted; but by authoritative absolution, in the sense wherein it is opposed, and wherein I have given it up, as not tenable, "I meant, a direct, immediate, particular, and peremptory absolution, of any single person from the sins committed by him; to which antiquity was totally a stranger, otherwise than as it was a judicial restoration of the sinner to the external privilege of church-communion. This was what I gave up, as unknown to the best and purest ages, and as being indeed a privilege too big for fallible and human powers." What of this kind our church may seem to have countenanced in her office for the visitation of the sick, I endeavoured to account for in the forementioned tract. Upon this I stand rebuked, as having only shewed my dexterity, in the change of words, whilst the thing continues as it was before, by my substituting authoritative intercession in the room of such absolution. Yet, certainly, the difference is very wide, between the one and the other; since the intercession pretends no claim upon God, but only recommends the sinner, supposed a penitent, to his mercy and forgiveness; and after a course of such intercessions for him, the penitent is there represented as re-admitted authoritatively, and judicially, to the communion of the church. Even this intercession is, however, described as an act of office, and as such authoritative. Will the gentlemen now, who object to the authoritative absolution, speak out plainly, and tell us, that they mean, in this sense, to oppose it? Will they say, that it is no more incumbent upon the priest, in this

manner, to intercede for the penitent's forgiveness, than it is upon any other member of the congregation; or that any other member of the congregation hath equal right with the priest, to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; or the solemn offices of supplication, prayer, and intercession? If this will not be said; and if the publick celebration of these offices, be therefore confessed an appropriate act of the priesthood; if it be not only founded in positive institution; but hath also a farther support in the intrinsic reason and order of things; and if, upon the supposal of any worship, these fences, in themselves, are necessary, to preserve it from the wild effects of indecency and confusion; If, I say, the case stands thus in the argument before us; why are the mouths of some men, whom it least becomes, so open against us, for asserting our peculiar rights, and for insisting, as we do, upon the enclosures of our function? If in our necessary defence of these sacred privileges, some few of us should have transgressed the just boundaries of the question, or expressed our selves after a manner less guarded than we should have done; we should certainly have been invited to explain our selves, before we had been condemned, or before consequences had been charged upon us, which we all disown. I have particular reason thus to expostulate, and to push my complaint yet farther; who, among the other patrons of authoritative intercession, have been accused of making auricular confession, and a particular unburdening the conscience of all its secrets, necessary to precede that great benefit; whereas in the treatise, here referred to, auricular confession is expressly^a discarded, and the necessity of it disproved, and confuted: With what truth, or modesty, can it therefore be affirmed, that the patrons of the one, contend for the necessity of the other? I will venture here, in my turn, to recriminate upon these bold accusers, and to tell them, that, whatsoever measures of party-zeal may have vented this injurious charge; there is very little, in it, of reason, candor, or of common justice.

1 Cor. 15. 40.

With much the same spirit, and with no higher force of argument, the whole power of church-discipline hath, in these our days, been set at nought; tho' a church without discipline, is a society without government, or without any of that order and decency, which the apostle recommended to the church at Corinth; and tho', without a power of repressing and restraining disorderly members, who break in upon the fundamentals of its charter, it is well known to be impossible for any community to flourish, or even to subsist; yet, in defiance of all these consequences, human excom-

^a *Authoritative intercession.*] Dedication to his holiness Clement xi. of an account of the state of the Roman catholic religion throughout all the world, p. 24.

^b *Discarded.*] *Viz.* in part. 1. ch. 2. §. 10. of the penitential Discipline.

munications are given up, without exception or distinction, and represented as the instruments and engines of mere worldly policy and power: As if to reject an heretick, which was the apostle's advice to a bishop of Crete, were a mark of antichrist, and therefore out of character in a bishop of this church! There may be an extreme, I know, on the other side of the question, in ascribing too much to these excommunications, and in allowing their efficacy above, without personal demerits: And this indeed would defeat the main end of godliness, by enervating its power, by turning the whole of it into unaccountable charm and magick, and by sinking its very life and spirit into a mere dead letter of forms and ordinances. On the other hand; if, in the business of our salvation, all depends upon our selves, and our own agency; sacraments themselves are then, not ordinarily, nor generally, necessary to salvation; or, if they are so; every man may administer to himself, since he is supposed in no want of help from another; and then there will be an end of the christian priesthood: And if this doctrine of our self-sufficiency had been always true; our great High-priest himself may seem to have come into the world upon a needless undertaking: Now, if sacraments themselves are thus insignificant; exclusion from, or restoration to, them, will easily be apprehended of equal, that is, indeed, of no, importance. Thus far then the scheme is perfectly consistent with it self, tho' it hath the misfortune to fly in the face of the gospel, and to subsist upon the single bottom of mere natural religion. There is, I have confessed, another extreme; tho' I know not any protestant, who can be justly censured as going into it. But if, whilst our self-sufficiency in the business of our salvation is denied, the priest be any where represented as doing all for us; the consequence will certainly be, that we need not for our selves do any thing, when we may so easily put our affairs into the hands of another, to transact and solicit for us: Now this will sap the foundations of natural religion, and of moral virtue. Between these two rocks, I verily believe, the gospel designed to steer; and therefore if we would come up to its true intent and meaning, we must so join together its rituals and its morals, as to make them subservient to, not destructive of, each other. We may still, and we ought to, pay great regard to the dictates of natural and common reason; but we should also remember, that there never was a time, wherein religion subsisted upon that foot singly; nor, all things considered, is it likely she ever should so subsist; and therefore, I conceive, we should be more thankful than we are, for the helps of revelation, and for those peculiar institutions, which are meant to enclose, and fence in. Some few optimators, highly conceited of their own talents and attainments, may imagine, that they, for themselves, could sift well enough in the business

business of religion, without any of these assistances, which, to men of their mighty genius, appear as mean and beggarly elements, and utterly unfit for persons of their depth and penetration. Their way of reasoning upon this occasion reminds me of an unhappy criminal, who, when condemned for murder, supported himself mightily, by a vain assurance, that God would consider, and treat him like a gentleman. In like manner these men seem to expect, that God should use them like wits and virtuoso's. They consider not, that the bulk of mankind is to be provided for; and, gross as they may think the souls of the vulgar, Christ, their common Saviour, disdained not to undertake the redemption of them all. The experience of all ages plainly sheweth, that the intrinsic reason of things hath never yet been sufficient to govern frail creatures, without some preservatives of a ritual nature, to secure morality, and, by a due mixture of restraints and indulgences, to guard against the endless excursions of human fancy. View the state of religion from the very fall, and even before it; and I am sure it will be found, that in all its periods, it hath had evermore somewhat of positive form and ceremonial mixed with it. The patriarchal scheme, which is the nearest of any to the christian, had diverse rites and formularies interwoven with it; and sacrifices, with a priesthood, have been common to all religions. Here, I am sensible, we may easily exceed; and it is certain in fact, that human nature is apt, in this case, to exceed, where it is not restrained, and secured within proper enclosures; upon the want of which, the superstitions of the heathen world were clearly and justly chargeable. But then profaneness, with a contempt of ordinances, is what I now apprehend to be our growing evil; and, as extremes are very apt to beget each other, there is great reason to fear, that the nearer we come to the wildness of untaught nature, and to a religion of our own inventing, the fuller harvest will superstition at last reap from us, when we shall see our error, and shall find and feel from it, that rituals are necessary for keeping us close to any thing. This was exactly the case of the Jews; and there is the same general proneness in all mankind, to run out of defects into excesses: They had smarted in a long captivity, for their neglects of the worship which God had prescribed to them; and for their profanations of those sacred rites, wherewith he had enclosed their church and nation: And what was in fact the consequence, when they were let into a sense of their error? We may read it in the history of the gospels, and of our Saviour's addresses to, and conversation with, them: They thought they could never do enough afterwards, to repair their former misbehaviour: They descended then to the minutest care of each particular in divine worship, and loaded as well their offices of religion, as of common life, with an infinity

infinity of additional and worthless observances. And is it not plain in this church, even to a demonstration, that the neglects of some are taking, amongst others, the same turn with the Jewish? I am sure I write my real apprehensions, when I acquaint the reader with my fears; that at one time or other, there will be a direct reverse of the present bent and disposition; that our affected carelessness will end in the rituality, which now it seems most fond of depreiating; and that spiritual pride, will turn us at length into errant formalists!

It is high time to beg pardon for detaining my reader so long from my author; but indeed I have been carried beyond my intended boundaries, by a just sense of the daily indignities which are poured upon the positive and instituted parts of our holy religion: These, tho' I am far from thinking them of the highest moment, have certainly their proper use in the gospel-scheme; and should not therefore be exposed to the derision of the scorner, nor to the insolence of the bold blasphemer.



" **S**UCH errors of the press as have escaped my notice, I desire
 " the reader will excuse, and correct. But there is one,
 " particularly, in page 108. §. 15. of the tracts, which I cannot
 " trust to such a general apology: Because the press hath not only
 " mangled the text, but I have also contributed to pervert it, by
 " an improper note. For, upon a review of the passage, the signa-
 " ture of the cross, which is there referred to, doth not appear,
 " as I have represented it, (in note m) to have been certainly
 " baptismal: The passage therefore should be thus translated, and
 " the note upon it should be omitted; Whereupon the servants of
 " God, who are desirous of pleasing him, receive the signature
 " of the cross. If I were sensible of any like error, or of any
 " undue inference drawn from my author's words in any other in-
 " stance, I should, with less shame to my self acknowledge than
 " conceal it; as hoping for the good-natured allowance, which
 " was made in such cases, by that gentleman-like critick Horace;
 " de Art. Poetic.

Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.





THE
L I F E
 OF
St. C Y P R I A N.
 Written by his own DEACON
P O N T I U S,
 And TRANSLATED from Him.



ALTHOUGH *Cyprian*, a religious prelate, and a glorious martyr of God, hath written many things to perpetuate his memory beyond his life; although the copiousness of his eloquence, and that plentiful measure of heavenly grace which was conferred upon him, have branched themselves out in many useful discourses, which are likely to speak for him to the world's end; yet since this honour seems peculiarly due to the singular merit of his actions, that his example should be drawn out, and committed to writing for the use of others; I have thought it proper to contribute my mite towards so good a design, and to give my reader a short sketch of it; not that I imagine his *life* can be a secret to any of the *Gentiles*; but that I would have the memory of such an incomparable and signal pattern, preserved even to our latest posterity. I could not but

[*Life of St. Cyprian.*] That this was really written by his deacon *Pontius*, *Jerom*, in his *catalogus*, hath born expreſs testimony, thus ſaying; that *Pontius*, *Cyprian's* deacon, who accompanied him in his baniſhment to the time of his death, hath left a choice account of his life and paſſion. *Bishop Fell.*

think it hard and unreasonable, that (when ^b our ancestors have been so liberal in the honours they have paid to martyrs of a lower form, to laymen, and even ^c *catechumens*, as to commit diverse circumstances of their sufferings to writing, and hardly to let *one* escape them, for the benefit of us who were yet unborn, that we might not be unacquainted with such illustrious transactions, that then, I say) the passion of so great a bishop and martyr as *Cyprian*, should be passed in silence; who, even if he had been no martyr, had many things to be recorded of him, fit for the instruction of posterity; or that the several occurrences of such an useful life, should be buried in oblivion and neglect. These indeed are so surprizingly great, and of such wonderful importance, that I am discouraged from the task, as unequal to it, and unable to represent such uncommon merit in words, which will rise up to the dignity of my subject, or give my reader any just apprehension of it. Here, it is true, I find my self, to some degree, relieved by this consideration, that his praises were so confessed and so conspicuous, as to need no other blazoning, than what they derive from their own native lustre. But then, on the other hand, I have this added to my burthen, that you are so infinitely desirous to know all you can of him, and, at least, to be acquainted with his *actions*, when you can no longer hear his *words*. Upon such an occasion it would be too little for me to represent *my own personal* eloquence, as insufficient for so great an undertaking; when even *eloquence it self*, in its most perfect form, would never be able to satisfy your longings, nor to answer such raised expectations. Thus I find my self distracted, between two counter-striving motives; on one hand, oppressed with the burthen, and the difficulty, of suitably describing such illustrious merit; and, on the other, of resisting your continued importunities.

§. 2.

He begins his account of him from his baptism.

2. Where then should I begin; or whence should I take my rise, in entering upon the recital of his manifold virtues, but from the beginnings of his faith, and from his spiritual birth? Nor indeed should the actions of a man of God be dated from any other *era*, than from his being born to God. He was employed, it is true, before, in studies of a different sort; nor was the holy man without a very plentiful proportion of the arts and sciences, to adorn and polish him; but these I barely mention, as being yet of no other use, than only to the *Gentile* world; my purpose is to lay before my reader such an account of him, as I my self can attest of my own knowledge, or could otherwise extract from any of his elder works, after he became acquainted with the holy scriptures, after the light of heavenly wisdom had shone in upon him, and dissipated the clouds of worldly darkness. I am only to bespeak my reader's pardon, for saying *too little*, (where, I foresee, it will be impossible to say *enough*;) and to beseech him, that *Cyprian* may be no loser, by my imperfect representation of him.

§. 3.

He began his entrance upon christianity, by pure and holy purposes, by reading the scriptures, and by charity to the poor.

3. In the very beginnings of his faith, he judged it a matter of the highest moment, and most of all becoming the service of the God he professed to worship, to set the strictest guard upon the purity of his mind: Then he thought it would be fittest for him to attain the fullest instruction in *spiritual* truths, when by the firmness and vigour of his holy purposes, he should perfectly

[Our ancestors.] Next to the *evangelical writers*, succeeded in the christian church, the *martyrologists*, who wrote brief accounts of the sufferings of the primitive *martyrs*. Of this sort were the *acts* of the martyrdom of the famous St. Polycarp, preserved to us in part by *Eusebius*, and fully restored by our most learned primates of *Armagh*. Of this sort were those *acts* of *Perpetua* and *Felicita*, mentioned by *Tertullian*; and diverse other writings of the same kind, which have been since interpolated, and clothed in a modern dress for her modern purposes, by that great corrupter of all antiquity, the church of *Rome*. In the *Decian* persecution, this part of handing to posterity the sufferings of its martyrs, was committed to the care of *Tertullus*, one of St. Cyprian's presbyters. Bishop Fell.

[Catechumens.] These were candidates for baptism; which, tho' they had not yet received; yet, by their professed state of preparation for it, they were accounted *martyrs*, if they happened to suffer for the name of Christ.

have

have subdued all *carnal* concupiscence. ^d His second birth had not as yet illuminated the new man with the full lustre of heavenly knowledge; when even the first openings and dawns of its light, proved, alone, sufficient for dispelling, in his case, all former darkness. Nay, farther; when upon some acquaintance with the ^e holy scriptures, he had begun to inform himself in diverse particulars, not according to the time he had had for learning them, but, according to the speed of an eager and willing scholar; he presently fixed upon such lessons, as he saw would be of most use to him, in his great design of obtaining God's favour. His private patrimony he soon expended, and sold whole farms for the support of the poor; and thus he gained two points of principal importance, by renouncing and despising all secular views, (than which there is nothing more fatal to the true interests of religion,) and by fulfilling that law of charity, which God himself preferred before the sacrifices of his own appointment; and which he, who pretended that he had kept all the commandments of the law, did not attain to: Such was the speed, ^{Matt. 19. 20.} and such the ardor, of his piety, that he even commenced *perfect*, whilst yet a learner! Who, I beseech you, of all the ancients hath gone so far? Which of those, who have been longest conversant with the gospel, and who have been inured to its precepts for a course of many years together, hath been so liberal in these expences, as was this raw novice in the faith, one, not then perhaps suspected as inclinable to embrace it, who yet hath exceeded the longest standers in the praises due to his illustrious actions? No one expects to *reap*, before he hath for some time *sown*: No one dreams of a vintage, the moment wherein he hath prepared the ground for it: No one imagines he shall gather ripe fruit from a tree, which he hath just planted. But in *him* there was a concurrence of all these incredible circumstances; in *him*, if we may venture to affirm, what will so hardly meet with belief or credit; the harvest came, ^f in a manner, before the seed-time; we had from *him* the vintage, before the grape was budded; and ripe fruit, before the tree was well rooted in the ground.

4. The apostle indeed, in one of his epistles, hath directed us to pass by *novices*; upon an apprehension, that some remainder of that gross darkness, which overspread their minds in their heathen state, might not presently be dispelled; that being as yet unsettled in their principles, and not thoroughly instructed in their new religion, they might easily happen to sin against God. But as *he* was the *first*; so, I verily believe, he was the *only* person, who exhibited the noble proof, that the power of *faith* could make farther improvements, than any length of *time*. For altho' we meet, in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, with an account of a certain eunuch, who *believed with all his heart*, and was immediately baptized by *Philip*; yet there is really no comparison between *that*, and the case *before* us: For the eunuch was already a *Jew*, one who came at that very time from the temple, and was ^g reading the prophet *Isaiah*, and so had hope in Christ, tho' he did not believe him to be yet come: Whereas our *Cyprian* came over from the *Gentiles*, who were utterly strangers to the true religion; and yet from the very *first*, his faith was as ripe and perfect, as few attain to, even in their highest and *latest* advances. And, to be short, he made no manner of hesitation, upon the grace of God; he delayed not in the least ^h the completion of

§. 4.
Cyprian early
promoted to
an ecclesiasti-
cal office.
1 Tim. 3. 6.

Acts 8. 37, 38.

Ibid. 8. 27, 28.

^d His second birth had not, &c.] i. e. He was not yet baptized; but only in a state of preparation for it, viz. a catechumen.

^e Holy scriptures.] Which therefore were permitted not only to lay-christians, but even to catechumens.

^f In a manner.] I have expressed the sense thus qualified, which, in our author's words, is more peremptory. The meaning is only, that St. Cyprian, before he was perfected by baptism, brought forth all the fruits which could be expected from the most confirmed christian.

^g The completion.] i. e. He was presently baptized. He did not put off his baptism, as diverse did, who yet were convinced of the truth of the gospel, (the grace of God;) but immediately desired to secure

Job 1. 8.

S. 3.
One Cæcilius
converted
Cyprian to
the christian
religion.

of it: Nay, which is yet a farther and greater instance of his improvements, he soon arrived at the honour of a presbyter, and even of a bishop. For who could be shy of entrusting him with the highest degrees of honour, whose faith proceeded from, and with, such a spirit as his? Many things he did, deserving notice, whilst yet a layman; many, when he was promoted to the degree of a presbyter, wherein, with all the powers of his soul, he followed the example of ancient worthies, and laboured, as they did, to gain acceptance with his God. This was his usual conversation, when he had observed, from his reading, that any one stood commended by God; he would then persuade us to enquire, what were the particulars which rendered such a person acceptable to God: e. g. If *Job*, who is so famous for the testimony born to him by God, be called a true worshipper of him, and one who had none like him in the earth; then he would exhort us to do, as *Job* had done; that by following his example, we might also obtain the honour of such a testimony. ^h He so far neglected the waste of his fortune, and made such notable advances upon the strength of a faith, approved and exercised in various trials, that he seemed to be hardly sensible of those temporal misfortunes which attended his religion. Neither want, nor affliction, were able to break his spirit. ^k His wife's persuasions did not seduce him; nor did his bodily pains disconcert his virtue: But his piety maintained its ground, as being too well founded to be shaken by any of these tempests; no temptation of the devil had effect, or force enough, to make him flinch from his faith, or to withhold his gratitude from blessing his God, amidst all his calamities. His house was open to every comer; no widow ever took leave of him with her bosom empty; no one, who stood in need of light, or of direction, ever missed it at his hands; the weak found support, and the lame had their carriage from him; whomsoever the hand of the powerful oppressed, he stepped in to rescue, and undertook their cause, when no one else would meddle with it. Thus (^l he would be used to say) should they behave, who are desirous of acceptance and favour with God. And so reciting the example of all such persons, as were most eminent for righteousness, and transcribing it into his own practice; he became (himself) a pattern for the imitation of others.

5. Whilst he was ^m one of us, he had a great intimacy with ⁿ one *Cæcilius*, who was at that time a ^o presbyter in our neighbourhood, both by age and

secure himself of its effects, by the initiatory ordinance, which completed him a christian. The greater part of his life he had spent in *heathenism*, before his baptism; and he taught rhetoric at *Carthage* with great applause, whilst he followed the religion of the *Gentile* world: So that he was a very publick person before he was a christian, or a bishop.

^h He.] Who this was is somewhat uncertain, whether *Pontius* meant *Job*, or *Cyprian*, in the following description; or designed a parallel between them; or to shew, that *Cyprian* perfectly copied from the pattern of *Job* in these several instances; and made that use of his example, which he had recommended to others, whenever they observed an illustrious sample of virtue. But the mention of want and affliction, and the wife's persuasions, and bodily pains, seems to hint at the case of *Job*.

ⁱ Temporal misfortunes.] Such as our Lord foretold should be the lot of his earliest disciples; *Mark* 8. 34. *Luke* 14. 26.

^k His wife's persuasions.] Hence our most learned editor bishop *Fell* infers, that *Cyprian* was a married man. But as it hath been already noted for an uncertainty, whether *Job*, or *Cyprian*, were the person here intended by *Pontius*; we must be content to leave that inference, as an equal uncertainty, with that of the premises whereupon it is founded.

^l He would be used to say.] This looks as if the foregoing description belonged to *Job*; and was recited, by *Cyprian*, with a design of recommending it to the imitation of himself and others.

^m One of us.] *Viz.* a deacon; as *Pontius* was. So bishop *Pearson* interprets, *de nobis*.

ⁿ One Cæcilius.] St. *Cyprian*, upon his conversion to the christian faith, left the name of *Thascius*, which he was formerly known by, and took that of *Cæcilius*; which was the name of the person who had converted him. See the inscription of *epist.* 66. in note [*Thascius*].

^o Presbyter.] The unlearned reader is to know, that the importance of this word in *Greek*, is *senior*, or *elder*; and from the common signification of a person's age became a technical term, significant of a certain office in the christian church, which at first was usually born by persons advanced in years; as *sacerdos* was the common term for the *Roman* senator; and our *abbot*, or *elder-man*, from an original reference to the age of the persons usually chosen to that office, are now well known to denote the office itself, and have, in a manner, lost their original reference to the age of the persons filling it. So *Tertullian* — approved seniors (or elders) preside in our religious assemblies. *Apol.* ch. 39.

office;

office; one, who hath left behind him an excellent character for all good qualities: This was the person who brought over *Cyprian* from the errors of heathenism, to the knowledge and profession of the true religion. *Him* he ever after honoured with all observance, and reverend regard; not so much like an intimate friend who stood upon equal terms with him, as like the author of a new life to him; whilst the other was so obliged by his gratitude and good offices, and by the tender respects which he found always paid to him, that upon his death-bed, when he was near expiring, he ° recommended his wife and children to the care of *Cyprian*; and left him heir, as it were, of his piety, whom before he had joined to him in the same bonds of their common religion! It would be tedious to dwell upon each particular; and to enumerate every circumstance of his pious actions, would be a very laborious undertaking.

6. In proof of the singular reputation he had for all sorts of virtue; I need only instance in his promotion to the honour of the priesthood, and to the degree of a bishop, with the ° approbation of God, and thro' the favour of the people, whilst he was yet a novice, and generally thought but a young proficient: Altho' indeed, in the very first dawns of his faith, whilst he was raw, and unexperienced in his spiritual life, there appeared such illustrious tokens of his pregnancy; that tho' he could yet derive no honours from any office in the church, yet, great were the hopes even then preconceived of him, which loudly spoke him designed for the episcopate, so soon after following. It will here be unfit to pass in silence that eminent circumstance of his life, how, when all the people, thro' the love and esteem they bore to him, were moved, by our Lord, to call out for him to his destin'd honour; he modestly withdrew, and gave place to his seniors; and so by accounting himself unworthy of so high an office, proved himself really the more worthy of it: Since, indeed, he becomes the more deserving of any honour, who declines what he so well deserves. Mean while the people were the more impatient in their spiritual desires, not only (as the event hath since declared) to have so great a person for their bishop; but (it seems) the person, who then retired from them, and whom, by instinct from above, they were so earnest to find out, besides being their bishop, was, in the designations of heaven, to be a martyr too. The house, wherein he was secreted, was on all sides surrounded by our brethren in great numbers, who, with the utmost sollicitude and affection, searched each avenue and corner of it. What happened to the apostle, of being let down thro' a window, might perhaps have been his lot, as he much desired it should have been; had he then resembled the apostle, in the honours of his office. Then you might have seen them all expecting him with the utmost anxiety, and receiving him, when he appeared, with the highest transports of joy and satisfaction. After this, I must speak with reluctance, what, however, I am obliged to mention; some withstood him; so that he ° met with opposition enough, to force him

§. 6.
Cyprian is promoted to the episcopate against his will, and for gives his rivals.

2 Cor. ii. 33.

P Recommended his wife, &c.] The presbyter *Cacilius* was plainly therefore married, whether St. *Cyprian* were so, or not. If *Cacilius* made St. *Cyprian* a guardian to his children, or executor; then (from what the reader will find noted in epistle 1. note f) St. *Cyprian* was not yet in holy orders. But it is possible, that *Cacilius* might only recommend his wife and children to him as a friend.

° Approbation of God.] See this noted in epist. 43. §. 1. Thro' the love, &c. were moved by our Lord.] Here we see a notable concurrence asserted, of the divine co-operation with human councils, and human motives.

In the honours of his office.] *Vin.* had he been then a bishop. For when he was a bishop, God did permit, nay, admonish him to secret himself, and to retire, as we shall find in his epistles: And to that retirement of his, the present passage means some allusion.

Some withstood him.] The chief of whom were the five presbyters, who persisted so obstinately in their first prejudices against St. *Cyprian*; of whose factious intrigues and combinations, we shall hear more in the sequel; see introduction to ep. 43. and the epistle it self.

Met with opposition enough.] The passage is obscure. *Quidam illi resisterunt, etiam ut vinceretur.* *Pontius* is here exaggerating his hero's honours; and so seems to design compensating the disadvantage of his opposition, with the advantage of his victory.

admirandum

upon a conquest. Yet how indulgent, how patient, how kind and merciful, was he to these his opponents? How ready to forgive them; and with the admiration of many, to make them his familiars, and to receive them even into his bosom? For who could forbear admiring, that one of his apprehension and memory, should, in any instance, appear, insensible, or so soon forgetful?

§. 7.
Cyprian's
manner of
life and con-
versation.

7. His behaviour, after this, will require very extraordinary abilities to represent it in a becoming manner. His piety, his courage, his good nature, with the vigour and steadiness of his whole administration, were, all of them, his distinguished excellencies: His very aspect was reverend and gracious to a wonder; and no one could look him in the face, without a secret awe upon his spirits: His countenance had an happy mixture in it of cheerfulness and gravity; his brow was neither too contracted, nor too open, equally removed from both extremes of gaiety and severity; so that a spectator well might doubt from his appearance, whether he should love, or respect him most, only this was certain, that he deserved the highest degrees both of respect and love: His garb was of a piece with his countenance, alike distant with that from all extremes: He affected neither sordidness, nor pomp, in it, as being different effects of one and the same cause, and both proceeding from a vain ostentation: How careful he was of the poor, when he was a *bishop*, who, whilst he was a *catechumen* only, was so tender of them, may be worth the observation of all our clergy, who stand bound by the rules of their order to a more especial diligence in good works; as well as of all others, whom the common bonds of their religion have laid under powerful obligations to acts of charity and mercy: As to *Cyprian*, the episcopal chair created in him no new dispositions to them; but found him already possessed of them.

§. 8.
He retires,
and is out-
lawed; there-
in consulting
not his own
safety, but the
interests of the
church.

8. Agreeably to such distinguished merit, he soon had the honour of an *outlawry*. It was fit, indeed, that he, whose conscience already pronounced so well upon his faith and piety, should become yet more illustrious by the publick testimony of the *Gentiles*. The crown of martyrdom might even then, it is true, have hastened to him; and its speedy advances had been but like the rest of his other attainments, which were uncommonly swift and sudden; especially, since the repeated votes of the people so often called for him to the lions; but that providence had appointed him a gradual passage, thro' all the posts of honour, before he was to gain the top; and that the dangers, which then threatened the church, required the help of those rare abilities, wherewith God had blessed him. For suppose, he had been at that time, carried off by a vouchsafement of the martyr's crown to him; who would there have been to describe, in such lively colours, the advantages of divine grace, improving continually by the help of faith? Who could have applied the holy scriptures so effectually to the restraint of our virgins, within the rules agreeable to their professions of chastity, and within these decent

So tender.] It hath been observed already in §. 3. that he sold whole farms for the use of the poor, whilst he was a novice.

Honour of an outlawry.] The christians of those times, agreeably to the pattern set them by the apostles, rejoiced, that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ: They accounted it an honour to them.

Divine grace.] This (saith bishop Fell) refers to the treatise inscribed to *Donatus*, of the *grace of God*. For tho' that treatise was really written just after his conversion, and therefore long before his retirement; yet *Pontius* designing here to hint at his several tracts and discourses, takes the opportunity of mentioning that upon this occasion: Indeed that treatise well enough corresponds to what is here said of the advantages of divine grace improving continually by the help of faith; but then to ask, as *Pontius* here doth, who could have described these advantages, if *St. Cyprian* had been taken out of the way, when *St. Cyprian* had himself described them, before this period, is scarce reconcilable with propriety, or good sense: except perhaps that *Pontius*, in a general way, might here mention our author's past works; and ask, if such occasions should again arise, who could answer them?

boundaries

boundaries, as to ^a habit and apparel, which become the sanctity of their calling? Who could so well have instructed the lapsed, in the duties of repentance, or pointed out to hereticks the true doctrine of the gospel, or recommended unity to schismatics, or expounded the lessons of peace, and the methods of gospel-prayer, to the children of God? Who could have retorted so unanswerably upon *themselves*, the objections and reproaches which the blaspheming *Gentiles* are continually throwing out upon *us*? From whence could our brethren of the softer make, or who, perhaps, were a little weak in faith, have derived such encouragement to bear the loss of their friends, in hope of futurity? Where else could we have met with such instruction in the duties of patience and mercy; Who else could have furnished us with such an happy antidote against the effects of that perverse emulation, which takes its rise from the foul rancour of envy? Who, but he, could have raised the spirits of so many considerable martyrs, by exhortations deduced from the book of God? And, finally, who, but he, could have sounded, as it were, a charge, with an ^a heavenly trumpet, to so many confessors, ^b marked now the second time upon their foreheads, and preserved alive to be examples of ^c martyrdom to others? It fell out very happily and providentially, that a person, so necessary and useful upon many occasions, had his martyrdom deferred for a season. Would you have a proof, that his retirement was not owing to his cowardice? I shall offer no other argument in excuse of it, than that he *afterwards* suffered: From whence the conclusion is fair and just; that if suffering were the thing, which he chiefly designed to avoid by his retirement, he would have ^d avoided it *afterwards* as he did *before*. The fear which possessed him was indeed a just one; a fear of offending God; a fear which induced him rather to obey the commands of his God, than to be crowned with martyrdom against the will of God; to whom in every thing he was so entirely devoted; and he so firmly depended on the truth of those admonitions which he received from heaven, that he was persuaded he should commit a sin, even by suffering, if he had not at that time concealed himself, when his Lord commanded him to do so. Somewhat farther, I think, I should say, upon the advantages which attended the respite of his martyrdom; altho' I have already touched upon some of them; for, from the several passages which happened after that respite, I conceive it will appear most plainly, that his retirement was founded in no motives of cowardice, or of *human weakness*; but upon reasons and purposes of *divine providence*. A persecution, unusually fierce and raging, had made a terrible havock upon God's people; and, because our cunning enemy perceived it impossible to impose upon all, with one and the same artifice; therefore, whenever any of our soldiers were found off their guard, he took them singly, and so by various methods of stratagem, or force, he had demolished great numbers: Hence it became highly expedient, that there should be some skilful manager, to bind up the wounds of our brethren, who had suffered in these several encounters, and who, in applying spiritual medicines to them, might use either the knife for amputation, or balm for the cure, as the nature and quality

^a *Habit and apparel.*] This most plainly hints at the treatise concerning the *Habit of Virgins*; as the following references most evidently allude to our author's treatises, upon the *Cast of the Lapsed*, the *Unity of the Church*, the *Lord's Prayer*; that to *Demetrian*; that upon the *Plagues*; upon *Alms and Good Works*; upon the *advantages of Patience*; upon *Emulation and Envy*; the *exhortation to Martyrdom*; with the several encouragements which he sent by letter to the confessors.

^b *Marked now the second time.*] The allusion is not very clear; *Præsumo notatam secundam inscriptionem signatorum.* Might not the first mark upon their foreheads, mean their baptismal signature with the sign of the cross? And might not the second, refer to that *sealing* in the forehead, wherewith such eminent servants of God, as martyrs, are reprobated, *Apoc. vii.*

^c *Martyrdom.*] Any solemn confession of Christ's name, which was attended with suffering, tho' not unto death, the reader will find, entitled the persons, to confessing and suffering, to the character of martyrs.

^d *Avoided it afterwards.*] As it is evident he might have done, if he had been disposed to it.

of the wound should require from him: Accordingly there was such a manager preserved; one, of a genius, besides his other qualifications, singularly fitted for the dispensation of discipline, as running into neither extreme, of too much softness, or too much rigour; one, who amidst the various tempests, and raging waves of schism, knew how to sit composed at the helm of government, and to steer in the middle course, as became the church, in that difficult juncture. And are not these now, I beseech you, plain evidences of a direction from above? Or was it possible, that these things should come to pass, without a peculiar interposal of divine providence? Let such as think, that all this was the result of chance and contingency, look out for an answer, when the church of God so loudly and clearly tells them; "I can by no means allow, I cannot believe, that persons of great consequence are preserved, without a particular designation of providence for the purpose."

8. 9.
The charity
of Cyprian in
the time of
the plague.

9. But let us go on, if you please, to some farther particulars: A terrible plague broke out soon after; and made such a terrible desolation, that it swept away vast numbers daily; and, to the infinite astonishment and horror of the people, seized whole families, one after another, in a continued order, without missing any. All, in this dreadful juncture, were in the utmost consternation; every one halted to shift for himself, and to get at the greatest distance from infection, even tho' he deserted and exposed his nearest friends by it, as if, by turning out of doors the person ready to dye of this formidable distemper, it were likely that he should keep death out of them! Mean while the bodies, shall I call them? or carcases of men, lay up and down, exposed and destitute in various parts of the city; and begged the assistance of passers, by the moving consideration of their common calamity: Yet no one seemed to be intent upon any thing, so much as upon an unnatural and cruel plunder: No one seemed to be apprehensive, that he might soon, for himself, be in like condition: In short, no one seemed careful to do, as he would be done by. It would be unpardonable, upon this occasion, to pass in silence the behaviour of our priest, a priest of Christ, and of God, who as much exceeded the priests of the *Gentile* world in his charity, as he excelled them in the truth of his religion. In the first place, he assembled his people, and instructed them in the advantages of mercy, shewing them, from diverse instances out of the holy scriptures, how far the offices of charity would avail to obtain for them the favour of God: Next, he taught them, that there would be no great matter of merit, nor of wonder, in extending the effects of our care and affection to *our own* people; but that in order to be perfect, we must do somewhat more than a publican or heathen would do; that we must overcome evil with good, must copy the pattern of the divine clemency, and even love our enemies, and pray for the welfare of such as persecute us; according to our Lord's direction; *He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good*, and in like manner affords to both, his rain for ripening the seed which is sown by the one and by the other; nor doth he confine these blessings to those who know him, but even to such as are aliens and strangers: And why then should not he, who professeth himself the Son of God, imitate the example of his heavenly Father? We ought (he was used to say) to behave as becomes our birth; we, who are known to be regenerate and born again, should by no means behave unsuitably to the new relation we have contracted; but the goodness of the Father should be apparent in the childrens imitation of it. I pass over many particulars, tho' of great consequence, because I consult brevity; and content my self with such as have here been mentioned. If the *Gentiles* had heard him inculcating these lessons from the pulpit, their conversion had been scarce avoidable: What then must we conceive of their influence upon his christian people, who derive their name from their faith? The consequence was, that

Matt. 5. 44,
45, 46.

^a From their faith.] The name by which christians were known, was as ordinarily, the faithful, as christians.

their services were severally distributed, according to the diversity of their rank and order: They, who, thro' their poverty, could contribute no money, contributed what was more valuable, by personal labour and attendance. Who indeed would not have been forward to lift himself in the service under such an instructor, by which he was sure of doing a thing acceptable to God the Father, to Christ his judge, and, in the mean time, to so good a bishop? By this abundance of good works, good was done to all, and not only to the household of *Galat. 6. 10.* *faith.* More, indeed, was done, than what is recorded as done by the excellent *Tobit*; who, I dare say, would pardon me for affirming, and would allow it to me, that tho' *much* might be done *before* the times of Christ, yet *more* might be done *after* them; to which the fulness of all things was reserved. Now he only took care of those of his *own nation*, who were put to death by the King, and exposed in the *market place*.

10. His banishment soon followed after these several acts of piety and charity; as it is the usual guise of heathenism, to repay good with evil. I need not here rehearse the answer of God's priest to the *interrogatories* of the proconsul, since it is upon record: But the effect was, that he who had done so much good in the city, was forced out of it; he, who had taken so much pains to prevent the horrors of the other world from being publicly visible in this; he, I say, whose care and tenderness made him so watchful, for the common good, (how ill soever he is now required for it) that to him the city owes its being not quite deserted in that time of desolation; and then instead of having one exiled from it, few, if any, would have continued in it. But let the *Gentiles* look to this, who reckon banishment among their punishments! Our country to us is of less account, nor do we esteem any particular place to be so; nay, we even hate our parents themselves, if they persuade us to any thing against the duty we owe to our Lord and master. To them it is a very terrible thing, when they are forced to live but of their city; but to a christian the whole world is but as one great house; so that though he be banished out of this or that part of it, into some more obscure and latent corner; yet so long as he can maintain communion with his God in holy offices, he cannot esteem such a change of place to be banishment: Nay, he who serves his God as he ought to do, is even in his own proper country a stranger and pilgrim: For by restraining his fleshly appetite, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, and by putting off the conversation of the old man, he is a stranger not only amongst his own countrymen, but even in his father's house. Even if in other respects his removal thence could properly wear the name of a punishment; yet in a sentence passed upon him, for the trial and approbation of his virtue, it could not be a punishment, because in such a

Tob. 2, 3, &c.

Gal. 6. 10.

The banishment of Cyprian.

Luke 14. 26.

[*Interrogatories.*] These were put to him by the proconsul, concerning his religion; and his courageous answer to them is here referred to; which we have not at large, because the public records are lost, in which it was inserted, and he was immediately banished upon it. But there is an ancient MS. which professeth to relate the particulars of St. Cyprian's passion, and which tells us the answer was, *I am a christian and a bishop. I know no gods besides the one true God, who made heaven and earth, and the Sea, and all which therein is. This God we christians serve, his mercies we implore both day and night, for our selves, and for all men, and for the safety of these very Emperors.* And when the proconsul farther asked him, whether he persevered in that resolution? He replied, *that a purpose so well founded, and a will which had once devoted itself to God, should not be altered.* Then upon being asked, whether he would go into banishment to the city of *Curubis*? He answered, *I will go.* And upon being told by the proconsul, that he (the proconsul) had orders, to enquire out not only bishops, but also presbyters: He replied, *that informers were discouraged by the Roman laws, but that they would be found in their respective cities.* To which the proconsul rejoined, that he enquired them out at that very time, and upon the spot! Whereupon St. Cyprian answered, that their own rules forbade them to offer themselves, *that he therefore could not discover them; but that they would easily be found upon enquiry.* Then said the proconsul—*I will find them. I have orders, moreover, to forbid their assemblies, upon pain of death.* To which St. Cyprian;—*Then obey your orders.* Whereupon he was sent into banishment. If this be a true account; then we have the answers to the proconsul's interrogatories, which are here referred to.

[*Publicly visible.*] viz. by his care of the sick and destitute, who, but for him, would have lain in the streets, dead and dying; and so would have opened, as it were, a communication between this world, and the state of separation. We must consider this, by the way, as a rhetorical exaggeration.

End

case it is a signal honour: But let it be granted a punishment; certainly then it must be also granted a crime of the first magnitude in those, who can inflict what they think a punishment upon innocent persons: And let their own consciences answer, if it be not so. I enter not now upon the description of the place to which he was banished, nor of its several beauties. Let us suppose it as disagreeable as any one can represent or wish it; let us imagine it a very quagmire, without^h any water drinkable, without any green fields to entertain the eye, or any pleasant shore to walk on; but instead of any such accommodations, let us conceive the place altogether desolate, and removed from commerce, with nothing but steep precipices and craggy rocks to employ the eye of a spectator; yet even such a place as this would hardly bear the name of banishment, when *Cyprian*, a bishop of God, was sent to it; to whom, if the services of men were wanting, even the birds would minister, as they did to *Elias*; or angels, as they did to *Daniel*. Far be it from us to believe, that any thing should be wanting even to the least of Christ's confessors! With how much less reason can we then apprehend, that an High-priest of God, who had all along abounded in works of mercy, should at such a time as that, stand, himself, in want of them?

1 Kings 17. 6.

Eel and Dragon 34. &c.

§. II.

A vision by night reveals to Cyprian his approaching martyrdom.

Matt. 6. 33.

II. I am next to acquaint my reader, as I do, with all imaginable thankfulness and praise to God, that the mind of this great man had an happy provision made for it in the place of his retirement, the situation of which was agreeable enough, as having a clear and an open air, and an house to accommodate him as private as he could have wished, which furnished him with all the conveniences promised to them, who *seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness*. I insist not here upon matters of less importance, such as the frequent visits he received from his brethren, and the affection of the people of the place, which supplied him with every thing, his banishment might seem to have taken from him; but I hasten to relate a wonderful vision of God to him, which ought, upon no account, to be passed in silence: For in this it pleased God so fully to assure his bishop of his following passion, that *Curubis* had not only an exile in it, but one, who by the strong persuasion he had of his approaching martyrdom, was already, in some sense, a martyr. The first night wherein we lodged in the place of our banishment (for he was so kind, as to take me along with him amongst his Domesticks, who was very glad to attend him as a voluntary exile, and I wish I might so have attended him in his last sufferings), before I went to sleep, (for I use his own words in this relation) "there appeared to me (as he said) a young man, of a very uncommon stature, who seemed to lead me to the palace, where, I presently, methought, found my self before the proconsul's tribunal. As soon as ever the proconsul cast his eyes upon me, he began to write a sentence in a pocket-book, which I understood not, because he put none of the usual questions to me; but the young man who stood behind him, was very curious in reading and observing what was therein written: And because he could not speak aloud, he signified by signs, to me, the substance of it: For stretching out his hand at full length, he so represented the sword, and imitated the stroke which is used in beheading, that no words could have made the thing more intelligible. I immediately apprehended it, that my sentence to suffer would follow thereupon; wherefore I addressed my self forthwith to the proconsul for a reprieve, at least for a day's time, till I could settle my affairs in a proper manner. And after repeating my request for it several times over, he began again to write somewhat in his pocket-book, though I knew not

[The reader will consider this as an African description, where want of water and green meadows was the most sensible inconvenience. The place of our author's banishment, *Pannia* intimates, was the reverse of all this. As to the *stare*; that, in a place of confinement, was the more pleasing, in regard to ships passing by, which might relieve the melancholy of solitude. See note [Interrogation] in §. 9.

" what.

what. I guessed his mind, however, from the evenness of his countenance, and the openness of his brow, that such a reasonable request had made some impressions on him. Besides, the young man, who before had given me notice, that I was to suffer; by signs, rather than by words, was forward here again to give me the like private intimation, that the reprieve, I had desired till the morrow, was granted me; * by twisting his fingers one behind another. Though this sentence was not read out, and though I was exceedingly transported with joy for gaining this small reprieve; yet at the same time I trembled for fear of being mistaken in my construction of the signs which had been given me, and the remainders of this fear made my heart beat violently a good while after." What now could be clearer than this revelation? Or what more happy to him than this distinguished vouchsafement of divine Providence? Every thing was foretold to him, in the very manner wherein it afterwards came to pass: Not a tittle failed him of God's word, and the promise was performed to him in the exactest manner. Let us then look back upon each particular of the vision: When once he was made sensible of the sentence designed for him, he begged a reprieve till the morrow, that so he might settle his affairs to his mind in the intermediate day thus gained by him. This * day signified a year, during which time he was to live after the vision; and exactly so it happen'd: For precisely upon that day twelvemonth, whereupon this vision was vouchsafed him, he received his crown. Now if we had not read in holy scripture, that the day of the Lord is a year; * yet that, or some like space of time, we should naturally expect would be taken in the case of promises, which always respect somewhat future; so that it is not very material, whether a year only be signified by a day; since the greater moment any thing is of, the more time perhaps may be requisite to compleat it. That this was opened by signs, rather than by express words revealed to him, was, because the words were reserved till the time should come. Since things are then wont to be expressed in words, when what is so expressed, is fulfilled in deeds, and verified by the event: For indeed * no body knew with certainty, why this was so revealed to him, till he came to receive his crown upon the very day, wherein he had the vision vouchsafed to him. Yet in the intermediate time, all people were thoroughly persuaded, that he was near his passion; though no one pretended to point out the precise day of it. Somewhat of affinity with the case before us, I find recorded in holy scripture; for when a son was promised to *Zacharias* the priest, he was struck dumb, because he believed not; so that he was forced to make signs for a *writing Table*, as intending to write down the name of his son, when he thought he should not be able to speak or to pronounce it. Thus when the messenger of God, in the case before us, chose rather to represent the approaching passion of his bishop by signs; he gave therewith an useful * caution to the faith of his priest; and at the same time prepared him effectually

Luke i. 63.

[By twisting, &c.] This, saith bishop Fell, was a known mark of the thing in question being postponed; as bending the thumb was a mark of condemnation, and holding it straight, a token of acquittal.

[The promise.] Martyrdom was considered as such an honour and privilege, that it came under the notion of a promise, when revealed beforehand to the martyr.

[Day signified a year.] So it does expressly in Numb. i. 33, 34. and Ezek. 4. 6. Bp. Fell.

[Yet that, &c.] *Ponsius* hath here expressed himself so obscurely, that I only guess his meaning. His words are—*Dixit autem Domini, et si non annus de divinis literis legitur, promissum tamen futurum debuit illud tempus accipimus. Unde nihil interest, si sub diei significatione solus annus ostensus sit, quid illud plinius debet esse* (I suppose it the mistake of the press for esse) quod majus est. None of the editors lend us any help, in this obscure passage; so I leave it with the reader to mend, or take up with my conjecture.

[A Year only.] For we shall find, that it signified literally a day, as well as mystically a year. No body. That is, no body but himself: for it had been said before in this, that he became he was assured of it; or perhaps he himself did not perfectly understand the importance of the day's reprieve, or that it signified precisely a year.

[Caution to the faith.] By reminding him of *Zacharias*, and his punishment for not believing, as *idem admonuit, et sacerdotem munivit.*

ally for the encounter which was drawing near him. The reason of his asking a reprieve, was for settling his affairs to his mind: But what affairs had he to settle, or what could his mind be supposed intent upon, except, upon, the affairs of the church? He therefore had a respite granted him, that he might have therewith an opportunity of expressing his tenderness to the poor, from the results of his last thoughts upon their case. And for this purpose, I verily believe, and for this only (*whether designed or not by them*) they, who had banished him, and were resolved to have his blood, indulged the desired time to him; the effect of which was, that he was enabled to meet his poor face to face, to give them his last relief, and, indeed, to bestow upon them his whole estate. Thus, when he had fully settled every thing to his mind, and liking, the morrow, till which he had asked a reprieve, drew near.

§. 12.
Xystus bishop
of Rome ad-
vertises Cy-
prian of the
approaching
storm.

12. A messenger arrived about this time from Rome, dispatched to us by Xystus, that good and orderly bishop, (who was afterwards blessed with martyrdom) to advertise us of the approaching storm. The executioner now was every moment expected, to take off the heads of such as were marked out for sacrifices; so that Cyprian apprehended each day would be his last; and, in that respect, he suffered each day what might entitle him to the martyr's crown. Mean while diverse persons of the first rank and quality, some of them from among the *Gentiles*, met together, who, in regard to their old acquaintance and friendship with him, persuaded him to secret himself, and added to their persuasion the offer of a commodious and safe retirement: But he had so set his affections upon things above, that he utterly neglected all lower interests, and so would hearken to no such counsels, as gratified flesh and blood: To which, however, he would, probably, have lent an ear, if it had appeared to him to have been the will of God, as it was the desire of all his friends, both heathen and christian. Nor may we pass over without due commendations, the honour due to this great man's conduct; who, when the rage of the *Gentiles* grew high against us, and longed for nothing so much as our destruction, took all opportunities of encouraging the servants of God, and of exhorting them from the holy scriptures, to reckon that the sufferings of the present season were not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. And, indeed, he had such an affection for all discourses upon religious subjects, that he always wished the moment of his martyrdom might overtake him, whilst he was discoursing upon God.

Rom. 8. 18.

§. 13.
Cyprian is
seized by or-
der of the pro-
consul, and
brought before
him.

13. This was the daily conduct of our bishop, destined now for a sacrifice acceptable unto God: when lo! by order of the proconsul, a serjeant-major, with a body of soldiers, suddenly came before his gardens; I say his gardens, which he had sold, soon after his conversion to the faith of Christ; and by a favourable

[*Whether designed or not by them.*] These words I have added, as explanatory to those of *Pontius*. He means, I suppose, that it was so ordered by providence, that his enemies should indulge this time to him.

[*The morrow.*] Interpreting the day of a year, the morrow means the approach of the second year from his vision, and the expiration of the year during which he was reprieved.

[*Orderly.*] *Pacificus* is the term used by *Pontius*, which usually signifies with our author, one who maintained the rules of discipline and order.

[*Martyrdom.*] *Viz.* on the 6th of August, A. D. 258, somewhat above a month before our author. The persecution began at Rome; and, as soon as ever the edict for that purpose was there published, Xystus, her bishop, was immediately sacrificed. See ep. 80. He had notice of its approaches some little time before, and sent an account of it forthwith to Carthage.

[*Old acquaintance.*] *Viz.* whilst he was yet a *Gentile*; who, as such, was a man of figure, and extremely beloved.

[*Will of God.*] As in his former retirement it did appear to him by vision.

[*Serjeant-major.*] 'Tis hard to adjust the names of the *Roman* officers with ours; we can only do it by way of analogy. I have given the name which I think comes nearest to the meaning of *Princeps* in this place. *Bp. Fell*, from *Gothofred* saith, that these were the chief of those who served under the *magister officiorum*.

[*By a favourable providence restored.*] What this was we are not informed; 'tis possible enough, that the person, who purchased St. Cyprian's gardens, might afterwards turn christian, and restore them to him.

favourable providence had them restored to him, and would certainly have sold them again for the use of the poor, but that he feared it might be invidious, and give umbrage in such a dangerous season. But tho' the the serjeant might think he came suddenly, yet nothing could really happen suddenly or unexpectedly to one always ready, and prepared for any event. He came forth, therefore, with all imaginable assurance, that the time was now ripe for finishing what yet lay behind, and that his reprieve was expired; accordingly he appeared with great cheerfulness and courage, and with all the marks of a resolute and undaunted spirit. But his case was respited till the morrow, and so he went back with the serjeant to the serjeant's house. And now the rumour was in every one's mouth throughout all Carthage, that *Thascius* was taken, who had all along been well known and esteemed amongst them; and more lately so, upon a fresh occasion of his singular charity in the time of distress: so that they flock'd together from all quarters of the city, to behold a spectacle, which, to us, was so truly glorious, from its displaying the noble powers of our faith, and even to the *Gentiles* themselves, an object of their utmost compassion. When he arrived at the house of the serjeant, he was put under a slight guard for that night; and, as a prisoner somewhat at large, had the liberty of his friends to attend him, as they were used to do, at supper. Mean while his people lay all night, in a body, before the door of the serjeant's house, that nothing might pass in this whole transaction without their knowledge. The goodness of God vouchsafed him (as he well deserved it) this signal circumstance of honour, that the people of God thus solemnly kept the vigil of their bishop's martyrdom. Some, perhaps, may be curious to know the reason, why he returned from the proconsul's court to the serjeant's house: And some will have it to proceed from no higher cause, than the mere will and pleasure of the proconsul; who, at that time, was weary and tired. But in events proceeding from the appointment of God, God forbid we should impute them to motives of so low a nature! God forbid, that any one of true religion should imagine it in the power of man to determine any thing, according to his own mere will and pleasure, of such a blessed martyr! But the morrow, which God had vouchsafed to foretel to him a year ago, was to have a literal accomplishment, and literally to mean the respite of a day. That day at length came on; that day of God, that promised day, the day which had so long before been pointed to him; which, if the tyrant would have tried

him. It may here be fit to supply a gap made by *Pontius* in the life of our author, which needed not then so particular a detail, because all circumstances at the time of his writing, were known, and fresh in memory. The proconsul had ordered *St. Cyprian* to come from the place of his banishment, and to settle in his own gardens; that he might have him near at hand, to execute any orders upon him, which he should receive from the Emperours. Mean while he (the proconsul) removed to *Uica*, which was a second sort of proconsular seat; and there receiving his orders from the Emperours, he sent for *St. Cyprian* thither; who having at the same time notice from *Rome* of what was then in agitation, sacred himself for a while, till the proconsul should return to *Carthage*, resolving then and there to meet him, and to suffer in his own episcopal city. Accordingly, as soon as ever he heard of the proconsul's return, he came back to his gardens, and waited there the proconsul's orders; by which, as *Pontius* here tells us, he now was summoned to appear before him. N. B. The name of the proconsul who banished him, was *Aspasius Paternus*; as the name of his successor, who recalled and afterwards beheaded him, was *Galerius Maximus*.

* Till the morrow.] Here the vision had a literal completion, as it hath been observed before (in §. 11. note a year only) to have had a mystical.

* Thascius.] This was the name by which he was known to the *Gentile* world, before he turned christian. * Time of distress.] Viz. the plague; in which *Pontius* had so highly extolled his charity to all sorts and ranks of men in *Carthage*.

* Kept the vigil.] In *sacerdotis passionis vigiliis*. This I take for an allusion to those vigils, or *veils*, which seem to have been thus early observed on the evenings preceding the days whereupon the *memoria martyrum* were celebrated. Yet the literal translation is only watched the night before his passion.

* According to his own mere will.] *Rather dominus judicavit*. *Pontius* would here inculcate, that all was in this case particularly appointed by providence; and that man was only a subordinate instrument in effecting its purposes.

* The morrow.] See this a little before noted here, and in §. 11.

to put off any longer, he would have found: he could not: a day which the conscience of the blessed martyr rendered a day of joy to him, in which the sun shone out upon him in its purest and most cheering lustre. He went out of the officer's house, himself an officer of prime account with God and Christ, guarded on all sides, and surrounded with a mixed multitude of people, who crowded in such numbers to keep him company, that one would have thought they had designed an attack upon death itself. He had about a furlong to go; it happened luckily, and had a providential appearance, that he passed by the usual place of exercise in his way to the proconsul; he, who was just upon the point of finishing his course, and of obtaining a crown of righteousness. When he came to the court, the proconsul was not stirring, and so he had leave to get out of the crowd, and to be more in private: Where, when he had got a seat (as by chance there was one with a linen cover to it, that even in some of his latest moments he might not want the symbol of his episcopal function), one of the Guards, who had formerly been a christian, offered him what accommodations he there had by him, to wipe off the sweat, which flowed in great quantities from him, upon the length and hurry of his walk; and would have changed his linen, which was wet, and given him dry instead of it. This was the pretence; but his meaning in the offer was to get into his possession some sweat of the martyrs, who was just going to God, and whose sweat (like his Saviour's) was now in a manner bloody. To whom the martyr thus replied, and said: *We are very careful in applying remedies to complaints, to which perhaps this very day may put a period. No wonder if he valued not any labour of the body, whose mind had already despised even death itself.* To be short; the proconsul had notice he was there attending, who presently ordered him to be brought before him; he appears, is question'd concerning his name, he owns it; and thus far they went in words.

He could not. The liberty of the proconsul's will was no more hence precluded, than was that of the instruments in our Saviour's crucifixion, who is said to have been delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; which yet did not lessen the guilt of those, who delivered and betrayed him. But it is not the business of this note, to reconcile the certain foreknowledge of God, with the liberty of human actions.

Some heathens, some christians. Some heathens, some christians, I suppose myself right in my translation; but let the reader, who can, judge for himself. I suppose it the place, where the people resorted, wrestled, &c.

It was impossible, in those times of distress and danger, that bishops or clergymen, should ordinarily wear any distinguished habit from other people: But it seems manifest hence, that they wore a badge of distinction, in the time of worship; and linen, it seems, was the episcopal habit. *Sedile autem erat sartum, linteum sectum, ut ex sub illis passim episcopatus honore frueretur.* If, I say, they wore an habit of distinction at any time, it must have been in the time of worship, since at other times it was impracticable; and where is then the harm of our surmise?

I have expressed my author's word by a general term; but his is more special; Tesserarius, who was one of those appointed to carry the watch-word from the commanding officer to his troops.

It was a very natural expression of respect and kindness in the survivor to a dying friend, to desire somewhat of his to keep in remembrance of him. Some early hints of this the reader may see in note [see p. 1] &c.

The act in his martyrdom, in that ancient MS. already quoted, and published by Bp. Fell, thus represents the questions and the answers to them. — *Procon.* Art thou *Lebanus Cyprianus*?

Cyp. I am. *Procon.* Are you the person who have acted in quality of a bishop to the men of ignominious principles? *Cyp.* Yes. *Procon.* The most sacred Emperors have commanded you to conform to the ceremonies of the Roman religion. *Cyp.* I cannot. *Procon.* Consider a little better of your own safety. *Cyp.* Obey your orders. In to manifest a case of right, there is no need of consideration. Upon which the *Procon.* consulted with his friends, and then, with much ado, pronounced the following sentence. "Long have you lived with an irreli-

gious heart, and have joined numbers with you in an unnatural conspiracy against the Roman deities; and their holy rites; nor have our most sacred and pious Emperors, *Valerian* and *Gallienus*, ever

been able to reclaim you to an observance of their ceremonies. Wherefore, since you have been proved a ringleader in crimes of such an heinous nature,

you shall be made an example to those, whom you have gained to join with you, and discipline shall be established in your blood." When he had said thus, he read the sentence it self out of his

pocket book. *I will that *Lebanus Cyprianus* be beheaded.* To which *Cyprian* subjoined, Blessed be God for all that hath befallen me.

God for all that hath befallen me. *Lebanus Cyprianus* be beheaded. To which *Cyprian* subjoined, Blessed be God for all that hath befallen me.

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14. But now the judge read out of his pocket book the sentence which before in the vision he had not read out, a sentence of so high a nature, and which carried such spiritual consequences, that it was not to be pronounced without great pause and deliberation; a sentence worthy of such a bishop, and such a martyr; a sentence highly honourable to him, as entitling him the ringleader of our sect, an enemy to their gods; one who should be made an example to those of his own persuasion, and in whose blood discipline should be first established. Nothing could be fuller than this sentence, nothing truer; and every word in it, tho' utter'd by an heathen, seems to have proceeded from immediate inspiration. Nor is this any wonder, since the chief priests among the Jews, prophesied, we know, heretofore, of our Saviour's passion. He was, indeed, a *ringleader* (or *standard-bearer*) as teaching his people to bear the cross of Christ; and an *enemy to their gods*, as always exhorting them to destroy their idols; and an *example to those of his own persuasion*, as being the first, of many afterwards his followers, who suffered in this province, and therewith consecrated to God the first fruits of martyrdom. *Discipline* also *was first established in his blood*; but then it was the discipline of Martyrs, who, with a noble emulation, to rival the glory of their teacher, have since established in their own blood the discipline founded in their gallant example.

§. 14.
A sentence of capital punishment pronounced against Cyprian.

John 11. 54

15. When he went out of the court, a great number of soldiers attended him; and, that his passion might more nearly resemble that of his Lord and master, he was guarded by centurions and tribunes. The place where it was his lot to suffer, was a large plain, which being thick set with trees, gave great numbers of people an opportunity of seeing from the advantage of their height; and the crowd was, moreover, such, that we could not, upon the plain, discern a great way before us; and therefore they, who were most eager to see the last of our venerable bishop, got upon the boughs of those trees; and so, as *Zaccheus* climbed upon a sycamore to see our Saviour, he also was seen from the tops of trees. And now having covered his eyes with his hands, he pressed the lingering executioner to hasten his office; whose fingers so shook and faulter'd, that he was scarce able to grasp the sword; till at last the hour being come for our martyr's being glorified, obtained for the officer strength from heaven to dispatch our martyr thither. Happy the people of that church, who, with their public declaration, and by what they saw and felt at that instant, suffered in company with such an illustrious bishop! And who, as they had often heard him speaking from the pulpit, had their crown assigned them from the sentence of God! For though it was impossible for his whole people to partake

§. 15.
The preliminaries of St. Cyprian's passion.

Luke 19. 4

• *Pause and deliberation.* Accordingly there was a full year between the first representation of it in the vision; and the execution of it afterwards in fact.

• *Worthy of such a bishop.* One who so well deserved the honour and the reward of martyrdom.

• *Chief priests.* The Roman magistrates were usually members of their pontifical college; and so the allusion becomes the more pertinent, to the prophecy of *Caiaphas*, here referred to.

• *Ringleader, or standard-bearer.* One who bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus; who carried his standard, by bearing his cross, as well as by recommending the doctrine of it. In this particular sense, as well as in the more general one, of being a christian and a bishop, he bore our Lord's standard. Observe here, how well the acts of the passion, represented to us in the forementioned MS. fall in with the hints here given by *Pontius*.

• *The first.* Either the first in the *Valerian* persecution, or else the first bishop, as *Pontius* observes in the following §, who suffer'd for the name of Christ. Under one, or other, of these restrictions we are to understand him.

• *Discipline of martyrs.* Not, as the sentence imported, the discipline of the Roman laws; but the discipline which was to lead martyrs to their crown.

• *That his passion might the more nearly resemble, &c.* This I take to be the meaning of the words, *ne quis in passionem desisset*. We read in *Mat. 27. 14.* of the *Centurion* and those with him who watched Jesus. And a little farther, we have such another allusion from St. Cyprian's to our Saviour's passion, in the case of *Zaccheus*.

• *Public declaration.* Some public testimony they gave of their willingness to suffer with him.

• *Sentence of God.* *Deo iudice.* The allusion here is agonistical. In the prizes contended for by the heathens at their games and exercises, there was *pegeles*, or *pegadis*, a judge, who allotted prizes to the

partake all at once of his glory, or to suffer with him, as they desired to have done; yet whoever had it really in his wishes and purposes, who had Christ the witness of those purposes, and uttered them in the hearing of his bishop; hath sent, as it were, letters of martyrdom to God, duly and sufficiently attested, instead of going in person to him. The conclusion of our martyr's sufferings, as he had been in his life-time a pattern of all virtues, so at his death exhibited the first example of a priest in *Africa*, whose vestments were dyed with his own blood: For no one so suffered there from the apostle's times to his. If we run through the whole catalogue of bishops from their original settlement at *Carthage*, down to the days of our holy martyr; not one of them, how worthy soever in other respects, will be found to have died for the cause of Christ; although that degree of devotion to God, and that resolution of mind which would make a man a martyr, may be graciously accepted instead of martyrdom: But the mercies of God to *Cyprian* vouchsafed him the opportunity of perfecting his crown by an actual martyrdom; and the farther honour of being the first bishop in that city, wherein he had led such an exemplary life, and done so many worthy actions, who adorned his episcopate with his blood. What shall I now do farther? My joy for his glorious sufferings, and my sorrow for being left behind him, do perfectly distract my thoughts, and I know not which way to turn them in the midst of two such bounter-striving passions. Should I grieve for not bearing him company? That ill comports with the triumphs due to his joyful victory! Or should I celebrate the triumphs of his victory? On the other hand; that agrees not well with the sorrow I feel for being left behind him! I will freely and plainly confess my sentiments, which you well know I have always entertained upon this occasion: I am truly and highly joyful for the glory he hath acquired; but then I am as truly, and really more, sorrowful, that I did not attend him.

the prize; to which the apostle alludes, 2 Tim. 4. 8. where he mentions the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, should assign him.

Letters of martyrdom.] i. e. instead of suffering martyrdom, they sent up, as it were, to God, a message, importing, that they would have suffered it, if they might; and when a man cannot go himself, the next office of civility is sending by a fit messenger. The messenger here was St. *Cyprian*, who carried their *litteras legationis* to God. The message he carried, was that publick testimony they gave (by some exclamation, I suppose,) of their readiness to die with him.

First in *Africa*.] See note (the first) in the preceding §.

From their original settlement.] As yet they had a catalogue in the *African* church, and a clear succession of bishops from the fountain down to the *Cyprianick* age; as *Irenaeus* had before attested the same of his times: *Habemus annumerare vos qui ab apostolis instituti sunt episcopi in ecclesiis, et successores eorum usque ad nos.* lib. 3. c. 3. And *Tertullian* in like manner of his; *Habemus et Joannem alumnum ecclesiasticum Ordinis, et successorem ad originem recensum in Joannem stabit auctorem. Sic et ceterorum generositas recognoscitur.* *Advers. Marcion.* l. 4. c. 5.

Actual martyrdom.] How favourably soever the purposes of martyrdom might be accepted, yet actual martyrdom was certainly more glorious. N. B. Our holy martyr suffered on the 14th day of September, A. D. 258. and was buried in the *Mappalian* way, within a plat of ground belonging to *Macrobinus Candidus*, as the acts of his passion in the forecited MS. inform us. He had two churches afterwards erected to his memory (as Dr. *Cave* from *Vic. de persec. Vandal.* hath written in his life) one, upon the place where he suffer'd; the other upon the *Mappalian* way, where he was buried. The former was called *Cyprian's Table*, because there he was made a sacrifice to God; there also the people of *Carthage* celebrated their anniversary commemorations of him; and the festival they kept on this account they termed *Cypriana*.





THE
Genuine WORKS
OF
St. CYPRIAN.

TO DONATUS.
Of the GRACE of GOD.

Although the following tract seems to represent some past conversation between our author and Donatus, it doth not follow that such conversation did ever pass between them; since the form of writing is discretionary; and Cicero's dialogues are no proofs, that the persons represented in them did ever hold such discourse together. This tract was written soon after St. Cyprian's conversion; and the person to whom it is inscrib'd, is justly suppos'd to have been the companion of his studies in rhetoric, as well as of his baptism. Now as Easter, with all the intermediate days between that and Whitsuntide, was the solemn season for baptism; so St. Cyprian seems to have compos'd this treatise in the autumn next following his own baptism; which the right reverend and learned annalist upon his works, hath placed in the year of our Lord 246, whilst our author was yet a layman. The style of it is pompous and rhetorical, which

A. D. 146.

* Learned annalist] Bp. Pearson; to whose most judicious and exact observations I am much beholden in the several introductions, which I have prefix'd before our author's tracts and epistles.

much countenances the opinion, that he was then come fresh from his profession of oratory. The design of it was to satyrize upon the prevailing wickednesses of heathen life and practice, to display the excellence of the religion he had so lately embraced, and to give moreover the reasons which induced him to exchange the pagan for the christian worship. Some promise of this kind he seems to have made to this Donatus; tho' the epistle ascribed to Donatus, wherein he is represented as demanding the performance of St. Cyprian's promise, is unquestionably spurious. It was usual (however) in those times for men of distinguished characters, when they first embraced the christian faith, to write apologies, or reasons for their so doing. And of this kind we are to esteem the ensuing treatise.

A. D. 246.
The introduction.



YOU remind me of my promise, my dear Donatus, very opportunely; I acknowledge the debt, and this is a very proper time for paying it, when the vacation allotted to the vintage season leaves the mind at liberty to enjoy its share of the publick leisure, to breathe, disburden and unbend it self, as the season itself seems to do in this its stated autumnal festival. Nor is the place less suited to our purpose than the season, where the cool and gentle breezes refresh our bodies, and spread a calm upon our minds. 'Tis a pleasant use of such a place as this, to improve it by agreeable conversation, to warm and to edify our souls by set discourses and meditations upon the precepts of the gospel.

§. 2.
Our author proceeds in a personated way to the main subject of his treatise.

2. And now that we may neither be overheard nor interrupted by any improper person coming in upon us, or by the noise and bustle of the family, let us betake our selves to yonder retirement where we may be quiet and unobserv'd; and where the young branches of the vines twining themselves about the poles which bear them, have made with their spreading leaves a kind of portico or bower for us. The place it self hath an aptness to fix attention, and whilst our eyes are agreeably there entertained with a prospect of the vines and the trees before us, we may improve our minds so much the better from what we shall hear, as well as be pleased with what we see. But I know, discourse is what you want at present from me, and all which you desire. The pleasures of the eye you despise at this juncture, you look intent and wistfully upon me, of whom your affection and zeal have already, and by anticipation made you an hearer.

But what alas! and how little is it, which you can reasonably expect to gain by hearing me? My abilities are so far from swelling, like the grapes we see here, with abundance and plenty, that they are poor and barren, and can bring forth little or no fruit to purpose. However, what I have shall be at your service, and the subject it self will help me. Let oratory boast it self, seek its commendations and rewards in courts of judicature, and in popular assemblies. But where the supreme God is our theme, and our argument treats of things pertaining to him; the weight of things, (we should remember,) and not the wisdom of words is the proper support of faith. Upon the whole, you must rather expect from me strength of argument, than delicacy of expression; for I am not now bespeaking the affections of a giddy populace, with the common arts of rhetorick, but delivering the plain truths of the gospel, and of the maxims contain'd in it, which are best represented in their own native simplicity. Hear therefore from me, what must be felt before it

In our author's own country, Tertullian and Minucius Felix had done the same before him; and this very tract seems to have been design'd particularly in imitation of the latter's *Octavius*. Though the heathen festivals were generally held in abhorrence by christians, yet that of autumn had more respect continued to it by christian Emperors; who expressly excepted it, when they abolished others. By, Fell.

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can be learnt; ^d what proceeds not in the usual way of gradual improvements, A. D. 246. but is the surprizing result of a more compendious grace.

3. When I lay covered and overwhelmed with a midnight darkness, and floating uncertainly upon the waves of an un sanctified and secular life, knowing not where to fix my feet, nor how to order my steps, and utterly a stranger to the light and truth; under those dispositions of heart and mind, which then prevailed with me, I thought (I remember) very hardly of the gospel promises, and that the method of salvation propounded by it was utterly impracticable, since a man must be born again in order to obtain it, and must derive from the sacred laver of regeneration the principles of a new life; must put off the old man, and without any change of his bodily constitution, must be entirely renewed in the spirit of his mind. For how (thought I with myself) is so great an alteration possible or practicable? How shall I do to leave off on the sudden, and as it were upon the instant, radicated and habitual customs; which time and continuance have made natural to me, and which are closely rivetted to the very frame of my being? These things now have taken deep root, are settled and established in me. When is it ever known, that a man becomes a learner of frugality, who hath been much and long accustomed to sumptuous fare, and to live in luxury and riot? ^e How rarely is it observed, that any man becomes content with plain apparel and unornamented dress, who hath been used to sparkle in gold and jewels, and embroidered garments? ^f The man of ambitious views, who pleases himself, and glories in the ensigns of authority and power, can never well submit to the inglorious case of a private life. He who hath been used to the officious attendances of a crowd of clients must think himself much a sufferer, when he is left alone. In like manner there is almost a necessity, that wine should engage, that pride should swell, that anger should inflame, that greediness of gain should make uneasy, that cruelty should provoke and prompt, that ambition should amuse and please, and that lust should hurry, the man into rash and destructive measures, who hath long indulged any one of these several inclinations.

§. 3.
The wonderful effects of Baptism.

These and such as these were frequently my soliloquies; for as I was deeply entangled and ensnared in the errors of my former life, which I judged it impossible for me ever to disengage from; so I really seconded the evil propensities of my nature, by my choice, added strength to them by indulgence, and

^d What proceeds, &c.] He cannot here mean, that there is no such thing as a growth in grace, or in the measure of the stature of Christ; since even in the apostle's times there were babes, as well as perfect men in Christ Jesus, and exhortations were given to add to our faith all sorts of virtue; but he refers to those instantaneous conversions, whereby, in the earlier ages of the gospel, grievous sinners were suddenly struck with remorse, and led to a desire of baptism; which was always understood to carry with it a cure and pardon for all former sins. To somewhat of this kind Lactantius (in the third book of his institutions, and the 25th chapter) seems afterwards to have alluded. "Produce me (saith he) a man addicted to anger, to evil-speaking, to any unruly or disorderly behaviour; I will only apply to him a few words out of the book of God; and by the charm of them, he shall become as meek and tame as a lamb: Give me an avaricious, griping, close-fisted person; I will restore him to you, open-handed, and open-hearted: Let me see a man impatient of pain, and fearful of death; and I will presently make him a perfect despiser of dangers and gibbets: Shew me an adulterer, or a lascivious rake; and he shall immediately return to you, continent, chaste, and sober. Let a man much given to cruelty and bloodshed come into the christian faith; and all his rage shall be turned to clemency and mildness: In fine, let the most unjust, the most inconsiderate and grievous sinner, fall into gospel-measures; and you shall soon observe him a lover of equity, innocent, and prudent in his whole behaviour: For all his iniquity shall be wash'd away in one sacred laver of regeneration."

^e How rarely, &c.] Observe here the modesty of the primitive christians, both in their garb and diet: It was thought in those times inconsistent with the profession of christianity, to be over-nice or curious in such matters.

^f The Man of ambitious views, &c.] It doth not hence follow, that magistracy was held unlawful to the professors of the gospel. But it was indeed in those ages impossible; because the Emperors would be sure to have turn'd any inferior magistrate out of his office, who should have own'd himself a christian. So that it was a great temptation upon such officers, if they happen'd otherwise to have favourable sentiments of the christian cause, to keep those sentiments to themselves, and not to avow their opinions, which were so inconsistent with their places and preferments. It was not therefore likely that the man should then embrace the former, who was in any degree devoted to the latter.

despairing

A. D. 246.

despairing of any possible cure, I began to look upon them as parts of my self, and to favour them as my own proper attainments.

But when the saving waters of baptism had purged away the filth of my former conversation; when the light of heavenly truth shone in upon me, and found my soul purified, and prepared thereby to receive and entertain it; when the Spirit of God had descended upon me, and I was thence become a new creature, begotten again unto a lively hope; presently all my doubts were settled; all obscurities became plain to me; the light shone in after a wonderful manner upon my former darkness: Things appeared easy to me, which before looked difficult and discouraging; and what seemed heretofore impracticable, I was now convinced was very possible to be done. I distinguished thenceforwards that earthly principle, which, being born of the flesh, exposed me to sin and death; and that new principle, which I had derived from the Spirit of God, had now entirely devoted and attached me to his service.

You are my witness, and will recollect with me from what fatal mischiefs that death unto sin hath delivered us, as well as what blessings that living unto righteousness hath conferred upon us. You, I say, know all this without my recital of it; nor need I therefore make any invidious excursions into my own praises; ^s although it should rather indeed be interpreted as a mark of gratitude, than of boasting, to mention those virtues, which are the gifts of God, and expressly ascribed to the glories of his grace. So that now if we cease from sin, 'tis agreed to be owing entirely to his favour, and to the faith which is in him; as before our faults were justly chargeable upon human depravity. From God alone, I say, we derive our powers; in him we live, by him we are enabled to will and to do, and even in our present state are encouraged to look beyond it, and to forebode to our selves a farther and future good. Only let a religious fear and caution preserve us blameless; that so the merciful Lord, who hath thus favourably visited us with his holy illuminations, may take up his abode in our hearts, and delight to dwell with us as lovers of righteousness. For negligence and sloth, will follow presumption and security; and then our old enemy will be sure to take his advantage when we are off our guard.

§. 4.
Fruits of the
Spirit.

4. But if you keep close to the paths of innocence and virtue; if you do not suffer your footsteps to be shaken in them; if you rely upon God with all your heart, and with all your might; let then your proceedings correspond with your happy beginnings, and you will find your powers of action will be always equal to the progress of your faith. For it is not in heavenly as in earthly benefactions: You are stinted to no measure nor boundary in receiving the gifts of God; the fountain of divine grace is ever flowing, is confined to no precise imitations, hath no determinate channel to restrain the waters of life; let us but in earnest thirst for them, and open our mouths and hearts to receive them; and as much will flow in upon us, as we are capable of holding, or as our faith enables us to receive. From thence, when we have qualified our selves for the reception of it, by proper preparations of prayer, and all holy dispositions, we derive the power of expelling the *deadly person* of sin, and of cleansing the stains contracted through the pollutions of it; of composing dissension, and of making the violent and untractable tame and civilized: ^h Of obliging those impure and wandring spirits which have

^s Although, &c.] Observe here what large and glorious effects our author ascribes to the grace of God in sanctifying us.

^h Of Obliging, &c.] This power of christians in expelling evil *Damon's* from the bodies of persons possessed by them, is so often appealed to, and so strongly asserted by the unanimous consent of the ancient fathers, that there is no room for doubt of the fact, either that such bodies were so possessed, or so exorcised. *Tertullian* in his apology, *Minucius Felix*, and *Lactantius*, in several passages, are so clear in their assertions, and lay such a stress upon them, that had there been any error, we could not but have heard of it. The power of doing this was promised by our Saviour to his followers, *Mark* 16. 17. and why should we think he would not perform it? When the church was settled, an officer was specially appointed for this purpose; whose office (when those extraordinary posses-

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have got possession of human bodies, to confess who they are, by the force of our menaces; of expelling them thence as it were by mere strength of arms; and of increasing their pain and punishment, by various applications of our spiritual weapons. The whole transaction passes indeed invisibly; but tho' the wounds we give them do not appear, the effect of them is manifest; and the punishment which these spirits undergo is evident and certain. Thus in as much as we have commenced Christians, and have received the Spirit of God into our hearts, he exerts himself in us as he pleases, he worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Yet in as much as we still drag along with us these mortal bodies, somewhat there still will cleave to us of the secular life, and of its several imperfections. What accessions however are these of might and power, which are hence derived upon the inner man! Not only to be cleared from the pollutions which are in the world through lust; and to be secure against all the incursions of our ghostly enemy; but even to increase in strength; to be upon the offensive with him, to have at mercy, and under our subjection, the whole host and power of our grand adversary.

A. D. 246.

5. And now, to give you a clearer manifestation of the truth, and to lay before you the most evident proofs and tokens of the divine grace; I will endeavour to furnish you with proper lights for these purposes; and undrawing the curtain will discover to you in the fullest manner, the wickedness and darkness which have hitherto overspread the world.

§. 5.

Suppose your self therefore with me upon the top of some very exalted eminence, and thence looking down upon the appearances of things beneath you: Let our prospect take a compass over the whole horizon, and view with the indifference of a person unconcerned in them, the various motions and agitations of human life. You will then, I dare undertake for you, have a real compassion for the circumstances of mankind, and for the posture wherein this view will represent them. And when you reflect upon your own condition, your thoughts will rise in transports of gratitude and praise to God, for having made your escape from the pollutions of the world. The main of what you will observe will be, the highways beset with rogues and robbers, the seas with pirates; encampments, marches, and all the terrible forms of war and bloodshed; when a single murder is committed, it shall be deemed, perhaps, a crime; but that crime shall commence a virtue, when committed under the shelter of publick authority; so that punishment is not rated by the measures of guilt, but the more enormous the size of the wickedness is, so much the greater is its chance for impunity.

A general representation of the then prevailing enormities.

6. If you turn your eyes towards cities and places of resort, you will find there a more melancholy spectacle, than what could arise out of the most solitary desert.

§. 6.

The horrid entertainments of the gladiators.

Here you have prizes fought, and men embruing their hands in the blood of each other, for the entertainment of spectators as cruel and savage as themselves. Their bodies are dieted with strengthening food, their muscles filled up, and their limbs well hardened; they are, as it were, fatned for the sham-

ons grew upon the increase of christianity to be less frequent) terminated very properly in that of a catechist; to prepare adult catechumens for their baptism. In the church of Rome there is a great deal of trumpery and superstition crept in under the notion and shelter of this ancient office; the reason of which is now discontinued, and therefore we have very properly discontinued a practice, which hath no foundation at present left for it. See Note on §. 9. of the tract to Demetrian.

[Encampments, &c.] War is not hence, in general condemned; tis plain, that it was in certain cases allowable from what John the baptist directed to the soldiers; (Luk. 3. 14.) where he only restrains the common exorbitances of the profession; but does by no means condemn it as utterly unlawful: And it is evident that the primitive christians did not in all cases hold it to be so; since soldiers were always in the Emperor's armies without censure. The famous case of Antoninus's relief by the christians prayers, who were in his army, is proof enough of their opinion. Tertullian appeals to it, as to a well-known fact, in his address to Scapula, Chap. 4. Yet the notion of military virtue was certainly carried too high by the common estimate of the Roman people; and wars were often undertook by them, only for the enlargement of their glory or dominion. The Indian spoke truth to Alexander the Great, when he put him in mind of his being a publick robber. And with this view only our author must be understood to satyryze upon the common practices of war.

C

bles,

A. D. 246. bles, and pamper'd for the encounter, that they may sell their lives the dearer. Men are killed for the mere pleasure and recreation of men like themselves; and as if there were not otherwise ways enough of dying, there is a trade set up for murder, and great art and skill are applied to learning it; it is not, it seems, sufficient to commit the wickedness, without teaching it too! How is it possible for any thing to be more savage and inhuman? To have establish'd forms of killing, and to give publick testimonies of honour to the flagitious practice! Then again, ^k what a monstrous custom is it which prevails amongst us, of men exposing themselves to the fury of wild beasts, whom no judicial sentence hath compell'd to it? In the flower of their age, likely persons, and well accoutred, deck themselves out to their own funeral, glory in their shame, and fight with wild beasts for their lives, as if they were malefactors, when nothing but their own mad choice leads them to the encounter. Fathers are content to look on, whilst their sons are thus engag'd; the brother perhaps is engaged within the rail, whilst the sister is a looker on without it; and though when these entertainments are most pompous and magnificent, the price of the seats rises in proportion, yet rather than not be spectators of what ought to be their grief and their abhorrence, even mothers themselves (the more is their shame and scandal!) will purchase room in them at any rate. They do not consider, that in such unnatural fights as these, even the eyes which behold them are in some measure murderers.

S. 7.
The wicked-
ness of the
theatres.

7. From hence let us pass on to another kind of entertainment, whose infection is no less spreading, nor less scandalous, than the former! And there in the theatres you will observe, what will furnish equal matter of grief and shame to you. The tragick buskin is, you know, intended for an artful recital of divers horrible facts, which are handed down to us by the antient poets. And thus the old fabulous accounts of parricides and incests are again represented to us with the advantage of lively action, as if there were an apprehension, that time would (otherwise) blot out the memory of those horrid villanies. A suggestion hence is given to persons of all ages, that what they thus hear hath been done at one time, may be done at another; wickedness hence is not suffer'd to pass into oblivion, time is not permitted to wear out the traces, nor the impressions of it, but the horrors of the action are mitigated by applauded repetitions, it becomes thenceforwards exemplary, and will plead a precedent for your imitation of it. The pleasure which the actors give you, in representing to the life these various enormities of domestick wickedness, insensibly forms the mind to it, and thence is of fatal consequence to your virtue; the eye will easily teach you the impurities, which you see represented; and whilst the countenance of publick authority thus panders for vice, the lady who brought her virtue with her to the theatre, leaves it often behind her, and returns home, in thought and inclination a very strumpet. What a waste is here committed upon the spectator's morals? What encouragement given to the vilest practices? What fuel hence is ministr'd to every impure affection, whilst each contracts its proper desilement from the several representations of the stage? For instance, when the gratification of unnatural lusts is there exhibited; when men are emasculated, when they sacrifice the privilege and honour of their sex, and become effeminate; when the applause of the spectators is given with the loudest peals, to him who can act unnatural wickedness most to the life, and when his skill is commended at the expence of his virtue. All this is seen with pleasure, which cannot without shame be mentioned: to what lengths of wickedness may not a man thus qualified persuade you? He sooths your

^k *What a monstrous, &c.* He refers here to a practice then obtaining, in which, either for the sake of glory, or of lucre, or of both together, men voluntarily offered themselves to these trials of their valour. They were often hired for this purpose by the magistrate, who made his court to the people, by exhibiting these spectacles. During the commonwealth of Rome, this was one known way of treating the people, by such as stood candidates for any office. Either men with men, or men with beasts, fought for their lives; and there were persons whose known livelihood it was, to take hire for these purposes. This was also one way of punishing malefactors, to all which our author alludes in the §. now before us.

affections,

affections, indulges your senses, and thus imperceptibly undermines the powers of your conscience. And the mischief yet farther is, that vice comes here recommended to you with the appearance of some authority; and so the shock it might give you is beforehand softened, to procure it the better reception and the fairer hearing. *Venus* they represent to you as an errant harlot; *Mars* as a direct adulterer; and their famous *Jove*, (who, by the way, is no less famous for his raking than his ruling,) is sometimes introduced in his amours with all the¹ ensigns of his Godship; sometimes his divinity is cloathed with the feathers of a swan; at some times he is pleased to rain himself down in a golden shower, and at others, his eagles are employed as panders to his beastly lusts. And now, I beseech you, let me put the question, whether any man is likely to be a spectator of such impure representations, and yet to preserve the purity of his thoughts and purposes untainted? The people are always fond of imitating the Gods they worship; and here the misery will be, that the most enormous instances of wickedness will thus be consecrated into acts and instances of religion.

A. D. 146.

8. Upon this occasion, I cannot help farther wishing, that with the advantage of the situation, wherein I have placed you, you could look into the innermost retirements of these deluded people; pry into their secret chambers, and let in the light upon their most hidden corners: There you would observe such examples of the foulest incontinence, as no chaste eye would chuse to behold; you would see what it is almost a crime to own the sight of; you would see what the guilty actors would in the rage of their lust, and in the loss of their senses deny, at the same time wherein they are even hasting to finish the foul enormity; men burning in their lusts to each other, and doing those things which can minister, one would think, no pleasure even to the doer of them. Nay, (such is the prodigy!) the very persons who are thus guilty, are not ashamed to upraid the practices of others. Vice (as we say) takes upon it to correct sin, and the man who hath no other witness of his crime, thinks he is come off notably, when his own conscience alone accuses him, as if that were not instead of all other accusations. Those men declaim in publick against the very practices, whereof in private themselves are guilty: Abroad they condemn what at home they practise, and go on to commit those very crimes, which when they have committed, they are as forward as any to arraign in the case of others. A degree of effrontery and boldness this, which mightily makes for the cause of vice, and is entirely agreeable to the impudence of such abandoned prostitutes! After this, you will not wonder at any thing which can proceed out of such hardened mouths; since no words can stand in the comparison with such profligate deeds.

§. 8.

The enormity of private families.

9. And now after all the various forms of wickedness which have here been mentioned; such as the dangers of travailing both by sea and land; the numerous wars which are carried on throughout the world; the cruelties of one stage, and the obscenities of another; the infamous lusts, either of publick brothels, or of private families (where the privacy, by the way, gives a greater loose to the increase and progress of the guilt) perhaps, I say, after all these instances of sin which have here been specified, you may incline to think, that I have exhausted my subject, and that the courts of justice, because they are exempt from the danger of suffering harm, are therefore above the doing any. Thither then let us next direct our views; and there we shall observe what will raise in us yet higher and farther degrees of abhorrence and indignation; so that we shall soon be glad to take our eyes off again from the odious prospect.

§. 9.

The wickedness of the courts of judicature.

¹ Ensigns of his Godship, &c.] These several passages are satyrs upon the several fables of *Samuel*, *Cyclops*, *Danae* and *Ganymede*.

A. D. 246.

'Tis true there are wholesome laws extant in the ^m twelve famous tables, and inscribed by publick authority upon lasting monuments. But alas! in the very face of these provisions, in the midst of these wholesome laws, crimes are no less rampant, sin is no less prevailing, than at the utmost distance from them: Innocence is not preserved inviolate, even there, where it should find a defence and patronage. Nothing is there to be heard of, but the rage of noisy litigants, and even where the peace should be kept most sacred, it is broken as much as any where! There are all the instruments of punishment in view, and the executioner stands ready to apply them; and you may see there as various methods of torment, as there are members to be tormented in an human body. Who should here step into the relief and defence of the poor unhappy prisoner? Who? But the council whom the laws have assigned for that purpose? But he alas! will play booty, will prevaricate and deceive his client. Well then! In want of other council, the judge himself should assist the prisoner. But he will prostitute his office, and sell his decree to him who bids most for it. He who should sit as a just avenger to execute wrath upon such as do evil, (himself) doth the evil, and in condemning the innocent, becomes the nocent and the offender. No place, in short, is free from the prevalence of criminal and vicious practices; which spread their foul contagion in various forms through minds disposed and fitted to receive it. This man suppresses a will, and that man commits a ^a capital offence in forging one: Here you have children cheated of their patrimony, and there mere strangers seize upon the inheritance of the nearest kindred. Malice and calumny are encouraged to proceed with false witness against the innocent: The price of perjury is in a manner settled, so that it may every where be had for money, as there is occasion for it; and thus the innocent suffer whilst the guilty escape with impunity. All reverence for law is quite sunk and lost: Neither the justice of peace, nor the judge upon the bench is any longer formidable; that is not considered as a danger, which is to be bought off; innocence, amongst so many offenders, is so far from being a protection, that it is even accounted criminal; and it is a fault and an objection with bad men, to decline the imitation of them. Even the laws themselves seem engaged in an unnatural conspiracy to favour the growing wickedness of the age, and prescription begins to be pleaded for publick enormities. In such a state of things, what room do you think can be left for modesty or innocence? Where none are to be found, who will condemn and punish the guilty, none indeed, but such as are eminently (themselves) deserving of punishment and condemnation?

§. 10.
The exorbi-
tances of am-
bition.

10. But you will tell me, perhaps, that I have singled out the very worst and foulest instances of vice to declaim against, and to present a scene before you, which would shock any person not quite abandoned to all sense of modesty and virtue; and therefore I shall now desire that you would proceed along with me to a different view, and consider those pursuits of life, which pass in the opinion of the mistaken world for good and commendable; even there I will discover to you what should raise your aversion. There is a secret mischief lurking under all those gawdy appearances of honour, all those ensigns of military and civil power, that abundance of wealth, and that showy magnificence of authority and grandeur, which allure the hopes of the aspiring and ambitious; the out-side in these cases is gay, 'tis true, and pleasing; but the inside is tainted, and there are fatal mischiefs lodged in it. Like a poyson mixt up in some pleasant draught, to deceive the taste, where the cup which

^m Twelve famous tables.] When a colony was transplanted from Rome to Carthage, the customs of old Rome were transplanted with it. Hence we have our author mentioning by Roman appellations, theatres, baths, courts of judicature, twelve tables, capitol, &c. in Carthage, even as in Rome it self. Bishop Fell.

^a A capital offence.] This was any such offence as was punished either with death, or banishment and outlawry. Bp. Fell.

holds it, looks fair and tempting: But as soon as the draught is taken, the poyson begins to operate, and presently diffuses its malignant influence over the whole mass. Thus you see at a distance the magistrate distinguished by the splendor of his garb, and strutting in purple: All this looks fine and promising; but come a little nearer to him, and whisper in his ear the question: How he came by it? How little he was forced to be, in order to be great? How much he was obliged to bear from the arrogance of those who were to please him with their votes and interests? How many levees he first attended? How obsequious he was, and fawning, and how punctual in all observances, to gain the poor advantage of a return in kind, when no regard for the person, but the fear of his power should create dependences upon, and obligations to him? For after all, when his point is gained, and he is in possession of that homage which he courted with so much industry, at last it is not paid to his merits; but to his authority. To conclude this particular; observe with me the shameful end of all this pomp and flutter; when the time-serving flatterer discontinues his obsequiousness, and leaves the great man as little as he found him; then the disorders of his domestick affairs begin to be felt, and to torment him; then he comes to know how dear the purchase of popular esteem and favour hath cost him, and how ruinous it hath proved to his private fortune. ° A ridiculous and useless extravagance this, of the men who court authority and power! To amuse the people with spectacles and shews, which do them no real service, and at the same time ruine the man who exhibits them!

§. 11.
The vanity of riches.

11. Well! But let us proceed a little farther, and consider the case of riches, and of the men who flow in them; they buy out the poor from their neighbourhood, join field to field, and farm to farm; extend the compass of their possessions far and near; they heap up wealth in abundance; above ground swells the ponderous mass, and under ground they have their more secret hoards of it; and yet all this is so far from contributing to their happiness, that their sollicitude and anxiety thro' the fear of losing it make them miserable. Rogues, perhaps, may murder them, thieves may break through and steal from them their beloved treasure; or vexatious law-suits from the powerful and contentious may happen to consume it. These are the apprehensions which pursue them continually; they can neither eat nor sleep in quiet for them. In the midst of their jollity they have their private fears and mournings; and tho' they have all the accommodations in the world to make them easy; though they drink of the richest wines, and eat of the highest fare, and lye in beds of the softest down; yet the softest down cannot lay them easy, nor give them rest. They are so blind however as not to see, or so obstinate as not to acknowledge that their finery contributes to their misery, that they are chained to their gold, and instead of possessing their wealth, are really possessed by it. What intolerable blindness is this, and how thick is the darkness of these men's understandings! Instead of exonerating themselves, and of lightening their burden, they go on to increase it, and will not be divorced from their bewitching torment. Their dependents mean while, are not the better for them; the poor receive no assistance from them; absurdly they call that wealth their own, which they keep with as much sollicitude, as if they were to account for it to some other person; their friends, their families, and even themselves have no use of it. Like the dog in the manger, they keep it in reality for no other purpose, than to keep all others from being the better for it. And (to see the abuse of words and characters!) they call that good, which serves them to none but evil purposes.

§. 12.
The vanity of secular power.

12. But now, you will say, that at least authority and power, when joined to riches, must make any man secure, and must give him ease at heart; that the splendor of a court, and the guards which attend it must needs be safe and

° A ridiculous, &c.] Donatives of corn, abatements of taxes, &c. did real service; but the gladiatorial or other spectacles did none; instead of it they corrupted the people's morals, and were ruinous to the fortune of those who exhibited them. Bp. Fell.

A. D. 246. *satisfactory.* Alas! A man in these circumstances hath more reason to look well about him, and to be apprehensive of danger, than any other: He always fears more than he is feared. He pays dear for his power whoever possesses it; let him fence himself in with guards and securities never so numerous. The more dangerous his power is to his subjects, the more dangerous they become to him; before it can strike terror upon others, it strikes it first upon his own breast. It gives him pleasure and pain together; allures, exalts and flatters him, only to deceive, to depress, and to destroy him. The interest of punishment seems to rise in proportion to the capital stock of power; and the higher the advancement, so much greater is the torment which attends it.

§. 13.
*Piety the only
way to happi-
ness.*

13. There is but one way therefore of founding our ease and security upon a solid and lasting bottom; and that is, to get off with the soonest from the waves of this troublesome world, to retire thence, and to fix in the only sure haven of rest and peace; to raise our thoughts and apprehensions from earth to heaven, to interest our selves in the covenant of grace, to ascend up to God in heart and affection, and to furnish our consciences with those materials of happiness and satisfaction, which the men of this world seek after in a world unable to furnish them. A man who thus hath raised himself above the world will eagerly expect, will importunately seek for nothing from it. O! What a blessed state is this of repose and safety! How firm is the security which is derived from Heaven! What a felicity is it to be disengaged from the entanglements of this perplexing scene, to be purified from the dross of this sinful world, and to be fitted for immortality, notwithstanding all the former attempts of our grand adversary to seduce, and to corrupt us! The reflections we make upon what we have been, will oblige us to so much the greater degrees of love to God, for what we are like to be. Nor is there need of cost, or courting, or of any laborious endeavour to attain the highest dignity and happiness of human nature. It is the free gift of God, and may easily be had. His ^p heavenly grace flows into the soul; as the sun of its own accord enlightens the dark corners of the earth; as an ever-flowing fountain offers its waters to any who will use them; or as the refreshing dews descend unasked upon the thirsty meadows. When once the soul of man is brought to acknowledge and consider its heavenly extract, and hath learnt to raise it self above the world, it begins from that moment to enter upon the state for which it believes and apprehends it self created. You, for your part, my *Donatus*, are already listed a soldier of Christ; your care therefore must only be, to keep within the rules of that profession which you are engaged in, and to practise the virtues which it requires from you. Be diligent in prayer, and ⁹ in reading the word of God: At some times you must speak with God, at other times he must speak with you. Let him instruct you with his precepts, and form your mind by the guidance of his counsel; the man who is thence enriched, no one can impoverish; he who is filled with the fulness of God, cannot be empty. All the gawdiness and pomp of life will become insipid and jejune to you, when once you are convinced, that your care should rather be employ'd upon your self, and your soul be adorned with the graces of the gospel; that the house which God hath vouchsafed to make his temple, and in

P. *His heavenly grace, &c.* This is meant of baptismal grace, which carried with it a remission of all passed sins, and a title to all the promises of the gospel. What he says of the ease and freedom wherewith grace was given, relates to this only: For doubtless afterwards much endeavour was to be used in the course of christian duties, and salvation was to be worked out with fear and trembling; and even before-hand our Author mentions some qualifications to have been previously necessary; as well as farther care in the sequel.

⁹ *In reading the word of God, &c.* 'Tis apparent hence that the use of the scriptures was permitted to laymen; and even to persons but just baptized, in the age of St. *Cyprian*. The instruction here recommended to *Donatus* from the precepts of the gospel, and from God's speaking with him, sufficiently implies the reading, which here is mentioned, to be meant of reading the holy scriptures; which (as a very good judge hath well observed of them) are so able to make us wise unto salvation. 2 Tim. 3. 15.

which

which his Holy Spirit is pleased to settle up his abode, should be fitted up to receive him with a concern proportioned to the dignity of the guest expected. Let innocence and righteousness adorn this habitation for him. These are ornaments which no length of time will decay, nor accidents of weather tarnish. The embellishments of human art, will be soiled and withered with age; nor can any man depend upon the continuance of things, which are in their own nature so obnoxious to change. But the beauty, the ornament, the splendor of the house, whereof I have been speaking, is permanent, and will abide by you; time and accident can make no disadvantageous impressions on it; only the time will come, when it shall be renewed with great advantage, and be clothed with a more durable and better covering.

I have thus as briefly as I could, my dear *Donatus*, opened my mind at present to you upon this important subject. For though I am sensible, that your good dispositions, the serious ply of your thoughts, and the firmness of your faith make you a patient and willing hearer of the things which pertain unto life and godliness; and that no subject is so pleasing to you, as that which is most pleasing to God also; yet I have judged it fit to contract what I had to say, in regard that we are near neighbours, and therefore shall have frequent opportunities of conversing together upon these matters. Since this is then a time of leisure and recreation, let us spend the remainder of the day in gladness and singleness of heart; nor let the hour of our repast go over us without some portion of that grace, which hath hitherto employ'd our minds and tongues. The mirth of a sober meal should be expressed in psalmody; and as you are blessed with an happy memory, and a tunable voice, do you undertake this office and enter upon it, according to received custom. Your friends will have the better entertainment by their intermixing it with spiritual discourse, and with religious harmony.

¶ Nor let the hour, &c. *Clarus Alexandrinus*, in *Stromat.* Book 7. and *Tertullian* in his apology are concurrent with our author in this account of the christian's prayers and psalmody at meals, and of their reading the scriptures at the same time. *Bp. Fell.*



The VANITY of IDOLS.

This book seems to have been written by St. Cyprian in the year succeeding the former treatise to Donatus, whilst he was yet a layman, and in pursuance (somewhat) of the same design, viz. to discommend the religion he had left, and to prove the falsity and errors of its worship.

THERE is evidence enough, that they are really no Gods whom the vulgar worship. They were formerly Kings, or persons however of eminence and renown, to whom their subjects after their deaths paid religious honours, in memory of their royal actions. Hence temples were built for them, and to keep up the better a remembrance of their persons, images were made to represent them; to these they offered victims and sacrifices, and assigned certain days to be kept in honour of them. Thus what was originally intended only for the comfort of their survivors, to support them under their loss, became afterwards a religious observance to their posterity. Proceed we therefore to a more distinct enumeration of particulars, that we may thence consider whether this holds

A. D. 247.

A. D. 247. holds true in all of them. * *Leucothea* throws herself with her son *Melicer-tes* into the sea; and both are thence worshipped as marine Deities. *Castor* and *Pollux* dye (each of them) every other day, that each alternately may take his turn of life. *Æsculapius* is slain with a thunderbolt, and is presently thence advanced to the honour of a God. Before *Hercules* could lay down the man, he is represented as burnt to ashes in the mount of *Oeta*. *Apollo* was shepherd to *Admetus*. *Neptune* upon contract with King *Laomedon*, built a wall for him, and then was so unfortunate as to be cheated of his bargain. There is a certain cave in *Crete* known to have been *Jupiter's*, and they shew you his burial-place to this day: 'Tis apparent likewise, that *Saturn* was put to flight by him, and that *Italy* took its name from sheltering him. It was this *Saturn*, who first introduced the use of letters and money, from whence at this very time, the treasury is called *Saturn's*. He was moreover a great improver, at least, if not the original inventer of husbandry; and thence is always painted with a sickle: When *Jupiter* had forced him to run his countrey, *Janus* entertained him; from whence the mountain of *Janiculus*, with the buildings on it, derives its name; as also doth the month of *January*. He is represented with two faces looking opposite to each other; it should seem with a double view towards the past, and the succeeding year. The *Moors* avowedly and openly worship their kings, nor do they use any pretence or cover for this their practice.

§. 2.
Great variety
of practice a-
mong various
nations.

2. Hence, as nations and languages vary from each other, so is their religion also various and diversified, whilst they disagree in the object of their worship, and each takes the liberty of proceeding in its own way, according to the usage and custom which have long obtained in it. *Alexander the Great*, in that famous treatise which he wrote to his mother upon this subject, hath clearly stated the case as I have done; and tells her moreover that he had got this secret out of a certain priest, from whom the fear of his power had extorted it; and he confessed to him plainly, that the Gods commonly worshipped had formerly been men; that the memory of antient Kings was held in religious esteem, and that the rites of sacrifice, and the prevailing forms of worship had thence their original, and came thence to be established. Now pray let me put the question; Why, if Gods were once born, they now cease to be born, and we have no present instances of their increase? Is it that *Jupiter* is grown too old to be a father, or *Juno* to be a mother? And whence, I beseech you, hath it come to pass, that the Gods have exerted their power so strenuously in favour of the *Romans*, and yet been unable to protect the people who worshipped them against the force of the *Roman* arms? Upon *Proculus's* forswearing himself, *Romulus* was deified; so were *Picus*, *Tiberinus*, and *Pilumnus*, and *Consus* too, the God of fraud, who takes his name from counsel, and whom *Romulus*, forsooth, would needs have worshipped, after he had found his account in the trick he put upon the *Sabines* by the rape of their women. *Tatius* truly hapning to find a certain image in an house-of-office, and not knowing to what particular deity he should assign it, gave it its name from the place he found it in, and thenceforwards a Goddess was worshipped under the notion of presiding over those necessary conveniences, and called *Cloacina*. Even the passions of the mind, and the disorders of the body arising from them, have their proper Gods assigned them, and accordingly *Hostilius* deified Fear and Pale-ness. Some one or other hath made a Goddess of a Fever, and *Acca*, and *Flora*, infamous strumpets, have solemn worship paid to them. Nay, so very fruitful hath the invention of the *Romans* been in finding names, titles, and offices for their Gods, that they have one God, whom they call *Viduus*, and

* *Leucothea*.] *Alia Ino*. This, with the rest, refers to those fabulous accounts of the heathen deities, which the poets have severally given of them.

† *Italy* are.] Our *English* cannot be made to illustrate this etymology. But in the *Latin* 'tis evident, and *Latium a latendo* is natural and easy.

whose peculiar province it is to make a separation between the soul and body; A. D. 247. and he truly, because his office is so very terrible, and so invidious, is not suffered to come within the walls of their city, but hath a place assigned him without them; and thus indeed he is rather branded, than worshipped by the ceremonies of the *Roman* religion. * Doors, thresholds, hinges, and all ascents, as well as orphans, have likewise their proper Deities. These are your *Roman* Gods; and with these we may join *Mars* of *Thrace*, *Jupiter* of *Crete*, *Juno* of *Argos*, or *Samos*, or *Carthage*, or what you please; *Diana* of *Taurus*, and *Ida* the mother of them all, with the whole tribe of *Egyptian* (monsters I should call them rather than) Deities: Now surely these, if they had had any real power, would have exerted it in favour first of themselves, and their own countries; whereas on the contrary, 'tis evident in the case of the *Romans*, that the household Gods, which the famous *Aeneas* brought along with him into *Italy*, were overpowered and conquered before he removed with them out of his own countrey. There is also a Goddess of special fame, *Venus* the bald, who amongst us is much more exposed by being so, than she was by *Homer*, when he represented her wounded by a mortal arm.

3. * As to dominion and power, they are plainly the results, not of merit, but of fortune; and accordingly have sometimes been allotted to one people, and sometimes to another. The *Assyrians*, the *Medes* and *Persians*, have had their time and their share of government; *Greece* and *Egypt* have had theirs also. And now it is come to the turn of the *Romans*, who, if they look back to their original, will have reason to be ashamed of it. A vile collection there was made of profligate criminals, whose numbers increased from their giving sanctuary to the worst offenders! Their king, to shew how fit he was for the government of such a people, murders his own brother; and then to furnish themselves with wives, they enter upon a state, which should speak nothing but peace and concord, with quarrel and discord, with brutal fury, fraud and a rape. Thus, that they might continue and increase their numbers, they paved their way to marriage by a breach of the laws of hospitality, and afterwards defended the injustice of the fact, by waging a war with their wives fathers. The consulship afterwards became the highest step of honour among the *Romans*; and that began, as their monarchy did, in blood; *Brutus*, the first consul they ever had, slew his own sons, and the honour of his new office was established upon that wicked foundation. So that it was not the sanctity of the *Roman* religion, or the merit of its various ceremonies which gave that people such an extent of territory; but they, for reasons best known to providence, have received it for a certain time, and so long will hold it. Nor is there indeed any sure dependence upon presages taken from the established ceremonies. For no man could be more punctual in observances of this kind than *Regulus* was, and yet he was taken prisoner. *Mancinus* too was as observant as any of religious prodigies, and yet after all, he was forced to pass under the gallows. The

§. 3.
That the disposal of kingdoms was never in the hand of these fictitious Deities.

* Doors, &c.] *Scansus ab ascensibus dictus, & Forculus à foribus, & à liminibus Limentions, & Cardes à cardinibus, & ab orbisatibus Orbona.* The learned reader will easily perceive, that the proper, and the common name could not in our language be so adjusted, as to shew the aptness of the derivation of the one from the other.

* As to dominion, &c.] What our author hath here asserted, excludes not the providence of God from the disposal of kingdoms; but he argues *ad hominem* against the *Romans*, that it was not their virtue, nor any peculiar favour of the Gods they worshipped, which enlarged their Empire, since others had had their share of dominion before them. Thus God tells his own people, *That it was not for their righteousness, that he had given them that good land, for that they were a stiff-necked people, but to fulfil his promises to their fathers; &c. Deut. 9. 5. 6.*

* Gallows, &c.] The greatest ignominy which could befall a *Roman* general, was when he was reduced to such straits by his enemy, that he was forced to pass with his army under the gallows; which was made with two spears erect, and fastned to the ground with another crossing them at the top, and so exhibiting the form of a gallows. This *Mancinus* was forced to do, notwithstanding that when he was going into *Spain*, and religious prodigies seemed to threaten him, he was very observant of them, changed his course, and made for *Genoa*. *Valer. Max. lib. 1. Cap. de Prodig. Bp. Fell.*

A. D. 247. ^c chickens eat as well as could be wished in the case of *Paulus*, and yet he perished at the battel of *Canna*. On the other hand *Caius Caesar*, when prelages of this kind were all against him, and would have dissuaded his passage into *Africa* before the winter, passed over in spite of them, and by despising them, gained his point. All these pretended omens are vain and deceitful, and only amuse the credulous populace, which is content with the abuse, and willing to be imposed upon by those false and ^d vagabond spirits, who having sunk into the pollutions of this world, and lost their celestial vigour and purity, are desirous of drawing others into the same perdition with themselves, and of spreading the infection of their own unhappy error.

§. 4.
These Dæ-
mons known
to be such, by
the poets and
philosophers.

4. The poets well knew that these were *Demons*, and *Socrates* boasted that he was under the direct and immediate guidance of one of this tribe; and hence the magicians derive all that power, for which they are so famous, of playing their tricks, or of doing mischief; and yet ^e *Hofstanes*, one of their chiefs, acknowledges the form of the true God to be utterly invisible, and that those ministering spirits whom we call angels attend about his throne continually. *Plato* concurs with his account of this matter, and preserves the unity of the supreme being, styling the rest angels or ^f *Dæmons*. *Hermes Trismegistus* is likewise of the same opinion, confesseth the unity of God, and acknowledgeth him to be incomprehensible, and past our finding out. These spirits then keep lurking under such images and statues as are consecrated to them; they inspire the breasts of your soothsayers, they direct the flight of those birds from whence you take your auspices; they make the entrails of your beasts significant, they govern the lots, give answers at your oracles, and blend falsehood and truth together. For sometimes they deceive you knowingly, and at other times are themselves deceived; they disturb the course of life, and infest you in your sleep with troublesome dreams. They creep sometimes insensibly into human bodies, there they get an opportunity of injecting into your minds unnatural terrors, they throw you into convulsions, break your constitutions, and bring upon you various distempers, only to drag and confine you to worship them through fear of them, to refresh themselves with the perfume and *haught* of your sacrifices, and then by *loosing* what themselves have *bound*, they appear to you to be the authors of the cure. For the cure will naturally follow, when they give over tormenting you; and when they withdraw the cause, the effect will cease. Their main endeavour is to draw you off from the worship of the one God, and, when once they have seduced you from the true religion, to gain you over to the superstition of their impure and erroneous worship. They themselves being in a state of punishment, are perpetually seeking out for companions in it; and in order to it, are always endeavouring to make as many as they can partakers with them in the guilt of their revolt from God. Yet these very spirits, when we christians adjure them by the living and true God, presently give way, confess who they are, and are forced out of the bodies which they have happened to possess. You may observe them howling, lamenting, bewailing, as if

^g *Chickens, &c.*] The eating of the chickens was accounted a good omen, their forbearance a bad one, when food was set before them by way of religious trial.

^h *Vagabond spirits.*] This is just the language and sense of *Minucius Felix*, and generally indeed the opinion of the antients was, that the lapse of angels was owing to their love of sensitive good, and particularly to the indulgence of their lust with the daughters of men, and to this purpose they interpreted *Genesi* 6, 2.

ⁱ *Hofstanes, &c.*] *Pliny* B. 30. C. 1. informs us, that *Ostanes* was the first who wrote upon this subject, and he accompanied *Xerxes* in his *Grecian* expedition; and thence had an opportunity of spreading his poison, more particularly thro' *Greece*. (*Sp. Fell.*) He was grandson (probably) of the famous *Zoroastres*.

^k *Dæmons, &c.*] This word was usually taken in a good sense, till the *Valentinian* and *Gnostic* hereticks abused it, and thence the fathers generally use it in a bad sense. The scriptures sometimes use the word *Dæmons* with a bad meaning, but more generally with a good one; and they express the bad one by the word *Dæmonia*. But the heathen philosophers and poets generally meant well by the word *Dæmons*, or *Dæmons*. *Sp. Fell.*

chickens

they

they were whipped with rods, or tortured with fire, or extended upon a wrack, when we adjure them by the majesty of the supreme being; and they feel his power thereupon exerted against them. Even their own worshippers may ^s hear them upon such occasions, confessing whence they came, and whither they are going; either they depart immediately, or gradually quit their hold, in proportion either to the faith of the patient, or the measure of the grace conferred upon the manager of the cure. Hence (as far as they are able) they stir up the prejudices of the populace against the men of our denomination; and labour to make us hated before we are known; they are well aware, that we should gain upon such as know us; so that they would either fall into an imitation of our practices, or at least desist from the persecution of our persons.

5. There is at last but one God, who is the Lord of all things; such an exalted height of majesty and power admits no partner. We may form some estimate of this from what we observe among men. What one example is there to be named of sharing dominion, which either began with faith, and good meaning, or ended without war and bloodshed? The story of *Thebes* is famous, and the hostile dispositions of the two brothers towards each other, seemed to continue even ^h after their deaths. One kingdom, we read, could not contain the two twin brothers, tho' one womb formed and held them at the same time together. *Pompey* and *Cæsar* were near a-kin; but that knot was too weak to tie up their rival powers. Nor is this the single case of mankind; but all nature besides, and every species of beings in it agree together in the same conclusion. Thus your bees have one King, your flocks of sheep, and herds of cattel, have one common leader and ruler: How much more reasonable is it therefore to believe that the universe should have one governor, who by his almighty word, wisdom, and power, orders, disposes, and executes, whatever pleaseth him. His essence is too bright and dazzling to be visible, too pure and spiritual to be perceived by contact; too ⁱ high and exalted, to come within our estimate; so that we have no other way of prizing or esteeming him, than by acknowledging that we can never sufficiently esteem or prize him. ^k What temple then shall we presume to consecrate to his infinite majesty, who hath the whole world

A. D. 247.

§. 5.
The unity of
God.

^h *Hear them, &c.*] This is such an appeal to the senses of mankind, in a case of which they were competent judges, and yet had great reason to be interested against the truth so attested, that our author must have been out of his own senses, when he made this appeal, if there had not been notoriety of fact to support it. Let our modern scepticks see what answer they can make to it.

ⁱ *After their deaths, &c.*] The poetical account of *Eteocles* and *Polynices*, who had shared by agreement the kingdom between them, and were to reign alternately, gives us this token of their mutual hatred, that after they had fallen by each others swords, the flame of their funeral pile divided it self into two branches, and each ascended distinctly to the skies. So the poet *Statius* in *Thebaid.* B. I. v. 35, &c.

*Satis arma referre
Aonia, & geminis sceptrum exitiale Tyrannis;
Nec furis post sua modum, flammisque, rebelles
Seditione, rogi.*

And again, B. II. v. 431, 432.
*Exundans, diviso vortice flammæ,
Alternosque apices abruptâ luce coruscans.*

^k *Too high and exalted.*] *Nec asimari, sensu, major est.* A very learned and ingenious friend hinted to me upon this, that *sensu* should in all likelihood be written with a *c. sensu*, and I cannot but agree with him, though I have no MSS. to bear me out.

^l *What temple, &c.*] *Arnobius*, *Minucius Felix*, *Clement*, *Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and indeed the whole stream and current of the *Ante-Nicene* fathers, dwell much upon this topic of temples, altars, &c. against the gentile worship. But then we must consider, that they only pointed their satire against the abuses in this kind of the gentile worship, and against the limitations of the deity to the statues, images, temples or altars which were respectively assigned to him. We are sure however, that they had all the while their own oratories and altars, though applied to better purposes, and governed by proper regulations. Bp. *Fell.* The decree of the Emperor *Aurelian*, in the famous case of *Paulus Samosatenus*, proves the *Ante-Nicene* christians to have had places, (churches) appropriated to divine worship, and the most eminent part of them was the (*Synagogue*, altar, or) altar, which our author often uses to represent the whole church by, not only the material edifice, but even the whole body of christians united under a single pastor or bishop.

for

A. D. 247. for the habitation of his holiness and glory? Or how shall we dare to limit his omnipresence within the narrow dimensions of a little chapel, when even man expects for himself a more spacious dwelling? No! rather let us dedicate our souls to him, and sanctify him in our own hearts. Nor let us pretend¹ to assign a proper name to God; for God is his name, and we cannot find for him any more peculiar, or fit appellation. Proper names are only intended for distinction, where there are numbers of the same kind, or at least more than one. But God is one only, and therefore needs no character of distinction. He is a single, uncompounded being, whose whole essence is equally spread throughout the universe. Our vulgar people in many cases acknowledge the unity of God, their souls are often naturally, and almost unawares, reminded of their original. Thus you often hear them speaking in the singular number; "O God, and God sees it; I commend such a thing, or person to the protection of God; God will make me amends, as God pleases, and if God will permit, &c. So that the great fault of the gentiles consists in this, that they will not acknowledge, what they cannot but know.

§. 6.
The œconomy
of the christi-
an religion.

Hosb. 2. 23.

1 Cor. 1. 24.
John 1. 1, 14.
Luke 2. 32.

6. The œconomy of the christian religion, who, or what Christ is, and the method of our salvation in and through him, come next to be considered. The *Jews* were in point of time the first favourite people of God; their ancestors having approved themselves men of probity and religion. This ennobled their families, and was the cause of their prosperity and power. But in process of time, becoming corrupt and disorderly, and bearing themselves too high upon the privilege of their birth, they lost that favour through their personal transgressions, which the obedience of their forefathers had obtained for them. Their idolatries and corruptions they do not deny, and if they should, the calamities which have befallen them, would evidence the displeasure of God against them; their dispersion over the face of the whole earth, their banishment from their native country, and their vagabond unsettled way of living, are strong presumptions against them, that God is angry with them. Indeed, God himself had long ago foretold to them, that "towards the end of the world, and the consummation of all things, he would chuse for himself another place of residence, and another people to worship him, who should obey him with more fidelity and observance, and enter upon the privileges which they had forfeited through their disobedience. Of this grace of God, this new œconomy, this latter method of salvation, the word, and son of God is made the messenger and manager, who by all the prophets (go as far backwards as you please) was spoken of under that character, as a teacher sent from God, to enlighten mankind sitting in darkness. This is the power, the word, the wisdom, the glory of God. He descended into the womb of a *Virgin*, and through the operation of the Holy Ghost, took upon him our flesh; and God, by these wondrous means, united himself to man. This Christ is our God, and being a mediator between two, he put on the man, that he might lead him to God his Father; Christ became man, that man might become like Christ. The *Jews* themselves were aware that Christ was to come amongst them, for they had notice of it from their own prophets. But as he was twice intended to come amongst them; once in the fashion of a man, and to be a pattern of active and passive virtues; and then once again, in all the power and majesty of his divinity:

¹ To assign a proper name. So *Justin Martyr* had said before our author, in Apol. 2. No one can find one name for the unspeakable Deity; and *Minucius Felix*, *seek not a name for God, for God is his name.*

² O God, &c. *Tertullian* forms a distinct argument upon this topic, in a treatise which he hath entitled: *Of the refutatory of the soul.* Ep. Fell.

³ Towards the end of the world. This, it must be confessed, was an error common to most of the *Ante-Nicene fathers*, that they took the world to be near its end; and too literally interpreted these latter days, whereof mention is made in the prophets of the old testament, concerning the end of the world; which indeed were only meant of the last dispensation which God had decreed for the trial and reformation of mankind, by the ministry of his Son. See note on §. 19. *Of the plague.* (The world hastening to its Periods.)

They, overlooking his first advent, which was to be a state of humiliation and suffering, do now expect his second only, which is to be in power and glory. This blindness of theirs was a just judgment upon them for their sins; and this was their condemnation, that when they had rendred themselves unworthy of life, they should have it before them, and not lay hold of it; that seeing they should see, and yet not perceive it. A. D. 247.
Isa. 6. 9.
Mark 4. 12.

7. Wherefore when Jesus Christ, according to what had been foretold of him by the prophets, cast out devils by a word of his power, cured the sick of the palsy, cleansed the lepers, restored sight to the blind, made the lame walk, raised the dead to life again, forced all the powers of nature to minister to him, the winds and the seas to obey him, and even the powers of darkness to give way to him; the Jews were, many of them, surprized at the mighty works which he wrought amongst them; and though the infirmities of his flesh represented him only as a common man, yet the power of his miracles made them think him a dealer in magic arts. §. 7.
The miracles
of Christ, his
passion, resur-
rection, as-
cension, and
thence the
preaching of
the gospel. The chief amongst them, the doctors of their law, and the rulers of their synagogue, whom he had provoked to the utmost degrees of rage against him, by exposing their errors, and confuting their pretensions so unanswerably, seized at length upon his person, and delivered him up into the hands of *Pontius Pilate*, who had at that time the government of *Syria* entrusted to him by the *Roman* Emperor, and in a tumultuous way demanded that he might be crucified and put to death. That they would do so, he had (himself) foretold, and indeed the whole stream and tenor of the prophecies concerning him, had foretold the same; that it behoved him to suffer, not only that he might taste of death, but that he might conquer it; and when he had suffered, then to return to his Father who sent him, and thereby to exemplify the power of his majesty, and the truth of his Divinity. Thus the event of things confirmed the prophecies concerning them. For when he was crucified, he prevented the executioner, resigned up his spirit willingly, and of his own accord, and rose again the third day from the dead. He appeared afterwards to his disciples, just in the form and manner wherein he had before conversed with them, and their senses proved to them the reality of his appearance; he continued his abode with them for the space of forty days, exhibited all the while to them his bodily substance, firm and massive as an human body should be, instructed them in the great truths of the gospel, and in the lessons which thro' their ministry were to be conveyed to the world. Then he was taken up to heaven in a cloud which covered him; that so he might return in triumph to his Father, and carry up with him a sample of that nature, which he loved, which he took upon him, and which at last he redeemed from death. From thence he shall one day come again to punish the great deceiver, and to judge mankind, with the power of an almighty magistrate, and with all the terrors of a just avenger. His followers, mean while, were appointed to go throughout all the world, to preach the gospel, as their master, and their God should suggest to them; to turn mankind from darkness to light, to convince the world of the error of its ways, and to bring in the blind and ignorant to the acknowledgment of the truth. And to give the more weight to their testimony, and that there might be no temptation of ease or pleasure to the acknowledgment of the christian faith, you see that gibbets and racks, and various kinds of punishment are still, as they have ever been, the portion of his followers. Now these are always so sure witnesses of the truth, that no man will go through them for the support of a falshood; and thus Christ, the Son of God, whom we believe to have been sent to give life to the world, hath not only the acknowledgment of our lips, but the testimony of our suffering for the sake of his truth. Accordingly we profess our selves his followers and disciples; he leads the way for us, is the fountain of light, and the author of salvation to us: Upon his promises we depend, who hath undertook to lead all those to his Father in heaven, who seek to him, and believe

A.D. 247. in his name. And this is the sum of the Christian's hope, that if he be a follower of Christ, he shall be a partaker with Christ in his Kingdom and Glory.



TESTIMONIES *against the* JEWS: In Three BOOKS.

The books of Testimonies against the Jews, were written by our author against the Jews, upon (much) the same design with the preceding tracts against the Gentiles; only it required more time, and more acquaintance with the holy scriptures to qualify him for this, than for the former performances; and therefore the right reverend annalist whom I generally follow, hath assigned it to the year 248, in which our author was admitted to the honour of a presbyter. They are inscribed to one Quirinus, who was probably at that time a catechumen.

Cyprian to his dear son Quirinus, sendeth greeting.

A. D. 248.



Am very willing, my dear son, to comply with your earnest desires, and to forward those prompt inclinations which you profess to have, for being furnished out of the holy scriptures with proper materials to build you up in our most holy faith; in as much as God, in his infinite love to man, hath provided them for this very purpose, that by the use of them we might be drawn out of darkness and error into the pure light and knowledge of his will, and by the seasonable assistances which we should thence derive, might keep close to the paths of life. I have therefore composed this treatise just in the manner which you have requested of me; I have not handled the argument at large, but have in a more compendious way suggested proper heads to you, and as my memory would serve me, have ranged them under distinct titles and topics, and thus indeed have rather laid in materials for a treatise than composed a just one. However, this brevity is not without its uses to the reader; for whilst a larger book inclines the thoughts to rove and wander, what is written in the more compendious way, rivets it self more closely to the memory. I have therefore comprized my argument within two books of well-nigh the same size and bulk. In one, I have endeavoured to shew, that the *Jews* (as the antient prophecies had foretold of them) have revolted from God, and thereby have lost that peculiar favour which was promised to their fathers, and to their posterity; that Christians have thence succeeded to the place which they held, and are to be admitted into the church of God from all the corners of the world, upon the single condition of faith in Christ. In the other, I have opened to you the whole oeconomy of the christian Religion, have proved that the Christ, whom the scriptures had foretold, is actually

ally come, and hath done every thing which was necessary for the manifestation of himself to the world. This will be sufficient to draw the outlines, and to form in your mind the ^a first principles of the doctrine of Christ. You will daily get more ground and strength in it, and the eyes of your understanding will be more and more enlightened as you get a fuller acquaintance with the books of the old and new Testament, and take along with you the whole thread of the inspired writings. At present I have only sent you a taste of them drawn from the fountain-head; you may take for your self a ^b larger draught, and entirely quench your thirst in the waters of life, if you will in your own person resort to them, and apply them to their proper use. I conclude, my dearest son, with assuring you, that I am always your well-wisher, &c.

A. D. 248.

^a First principles, &c.] This alone is evidence sufficient that *Quirinus*, to whom these Testimonies are inscribed, was a novice in the christian faith; one indeed well inclined to it; but manifestly no higher yet advanced in it, than to the degree of a catechumen.

^b A larger draught, &c.] This doth not look as if the laity were restrained in those ages from the use of the scriptures.



TESTIMONIES *against the* JEWS.

BOOK I.

IN the Book of *Exodus* the *Israelites* address to *Aaron*; Up (say they) make us Gods which shall go before us; for, as for this *Moses*, the man that ^c brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. In the same chapter you have *Moses's* address to God; Oh Lord, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them Gods of silver and gold; yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin! and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto *Moses*, who-soever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Thus also you read in *Deuteronomy*; They sacrificed unto devils, and not to God; as likewise in the book of *Judges*; And the children of *Israel* did evil in the sight of the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other Gods, of the Gods of the people that were round about them, and provoked the Lord to anger, and they forsook the Lord, and served *Baal*. Thus likewise the prophet *Malachi* hath recorded his complaint; *Juda* is ^d forsaken, and an abomination is committed in *Israel*, and in *Jerusalem*; for *Juda* hath profaned the holiness of the Lord, which he loved, and hath ^e gone after strange Gods. The Lord will cut off the man that doth this, and he shall be of no account in the tents of *Jacob*.

S. 1.

That the Jews had grievously offended God by revolting from him, and following dumb Idols.

Exod. 32. 1. and 31; 32; 33.

Deut. 32. 17.

Jud. 2. 11, 12, 13.

Mal. 2. 11; 12.

^c Brought us up, &c.] The word in our author is *ejecit*, cast out; in the LXX. and in our vulgar Latin, as in our English version, *duxit*, brought or led out. The meaning denotes in both a change of place or condition; and as the Hebrew signified both the one and the other, the version expressed it with the latitude and indifference of the original. *Bp. Fell.* He that made us to come up out of the land of Egypt, is literally the Hebrew reading, and the Samaritan.

^d Forsaken.] So our author, and the LXX. with the Arabic version. But the Hebrew it self, the vulgar Latin, and other versions, refer it rather to the sin of that people, than to their desertion, which was the consequence of their sin. However, the difference is not great, since in either sense it was true; they having sinned, and being judicially forsaken for it.

^e Gone after strange Gods.] The daughter of a strange God, saith the Hebrew—Which the Chaldees paraphrase explains by their marrying strange women; and this in truth and fact was their crime, which soon introduced the other of worshipping strange Gods too.

cut

A. D. 248.

§. 2.

Their disbelief
of the pro-
phets, and
killing them.Jer. 7. 25,
26. and 25.
4, 5, 6.1 Kings, 19.
10.

Nehem. 9. 26.

§. 3.

That it was
foretold of
them how
they would
reject the offers
of grace.Isaiah 1. 2,
3, 4.

Isa. 6. 9, 10.

This applied,
Rom. 11. 8.Jerem. 2. 13.
and Chap. 6.

10. 8. and

10. 8. and

And again,

Chap. 8. 7, 8,
9.Prov. 1. 28,
29.

Psal. 28. 4, 5.

Psal. 82. 5.

St. John 1.
11, 12.

§. 4.

That the Jews
should not un-
derstand the
scriptures till
the latter
days.Isa. 29. 11,
and 18.

2. Thus you may hear God complaining by his prophet Jeremiah; *I have sent unto you my servants the prophets, rising early, yet ye would not hearken unto me, nor incline your ears. They said, turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of his doings, and dwell in the land, which I have given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever. And go not after other Gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, to make me destroy you. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me.* To the same purpose you will find Elijah lodging his complaint with God in *the third book of Kings; I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away.* Thus likewise you may read in *Esdra; They rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their back, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to return them to thee.*

3. If you consult the prophet Isaiah, you will hear the complaint of God by his mouth; *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah! sinful nation; a people laden with iniquity! a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupted! Ye have forsaken the Lord, ye have provoked to anger the holy one of*

Israel. And again, you will find God in the same prophet saying, *Go and tell this people; Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand, and ye shall see indeed, but shall not perceive. For I have made the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and have shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* Thus also you

may read in the prophet Jeremiah, where the Lord again complains; *They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no water.* And again in the same prophet, *Behold! the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have*

no delight in it. And again he pushes his complaint yet farther; *Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord. How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo! certainly in vain made he it, and the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo! they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?* Thus also you may read in Solomon; *The wicked seek me, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord.* Thus likewise you may read in the xxvii.

(alias xxviii.) Psalm; *Give them after the works of their hands, render to them their desert; because they regard not the works of the Lord.* And

again to the same purpose in Psalm lxxxi. (alias lxxxii.) *They know not, neither do they understand, they walk on in darkness.* And St. John's

observation tallies admirably with the foregoing complaints; *He came unto his own, and his own received him not: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

4. To this purpose you may read in the prophet Isaiah; *And all these words shall come unto you, as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee, and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed: But in that day shall the deaf hear the*

word. [The third book of Kings, &c.] Antiently they reckoned the two books of Samuel, among the books of the Kings; and so what we now entitle the first book of Kings, was formerly the third. [Esdra, &c.] Observe here, that Nehemiah is quoted by our author, under the name of Esdra.

words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. Thus also you have it in Jeremiah; In the latter days ye shall consider these things perfectly. And to the same purpose in Daniel; Shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end; until many learn, and knowledge be increased, and when they shall be dispersed, then they shall know all these things. Some allusion to these circumstances seems intended by St. Paul, where he saith, Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, &c. And more plainly in his second epistle to the Corinthians; But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which vail is done away in Christ; but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart; nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. And once more, observe what our Lord himself hath said in the gospel after his resurrection; These are the words which I spake unto you, whilst I was yet with you; that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me; then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.

5. To this purpose you may observe Isaiah speaking; If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand. And to the same purpose the evangelist St. John hath represented our Saviour speaking; For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall dye in your sins. Now that righteousness is by faith, and life by it too, the prophet Habakkuk hath clearly foretold, where he prophesies, That the just shall live by faith in me. Thence it is said of Abraham, the father of many nations, that he believed. So we read of him in Genesis; Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness; which passage is cited by St. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, as a proof of this very thing; and he draws from it the following inference; Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham; and the scripture foreseeing, that God would justify the heathen thro' faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

6. Thus you may read Isaiah prophesying; Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire; your land strangers devour in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Sion shall be left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. And except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. And thus you may read our blessed Lord himself complaining of Jerusalem, and prophesying its doom; O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou

When they shall be dispersed. This reading hath no direct countenance from any version now extant; but there is mention in the Hebrew of their running up and down, which is not very different from being dispersed. 'Tis very possible our author's copy of the scriptures might differ in some few points of no great importance from what we now have. But in every thing material, we have a very good opportunity of observing from him, that the Scriptures we now use, are the same with those which the church of Christ so long ago resorted to. So our author with the LXX, and the Syriac and Arabic versions. In ours we read it; If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. The vulgar Latin, Si non credideritis, non permanebitis. Which is also the sense of the Chaldee paraphrase; and the Hebrew is somewhat like it, That they should not be a faithful people, i. e. should not be accepted by God as such, except they believed. Our author reads it, the just shall live, ex fide mea, by my faith; the LXX have it as our author hath it. In all likelihood the word is transposed; and instead of a I have on a I have. The just shall live by my faith; it was written originally, in dinahim, as in witness I have, My just man (or the just man whom I will accept) shall live by faith: (so far Bishop Hall). Yet our author's rendering will admit of a fair construction, viz. The just shall live by my faith, or by faith in me; or by the faith which I shall require of him.

A. D. 148. that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not? Behold your house shall be left unto you desolate.

§. 7. Thus Isaiah prophesies; Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord; for he hath forsaken his people the house of Israel. Add the words of the evangelist to those of the prophet; That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. And again in the same gospel — He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.

§. 8. In the prophet Jeremiah; Thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your hearts, lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it. Thus also Moses; And (in the latter days) the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, &c. Thus likewise in the book of Joshua, the Lord is represented as saying unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. — So St. Paul to the Colossians; Ye are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands, by hurting of the flesh, but with the circumcision of Christ. It is evident besides that Adam, the first man, was not circumcised, as neither was righteous Abel, nor yet Enoch, who pleased God, and was directly translated to heaven. Nor was Noah circumcised, who had the peculiar favour from God of being the person singled out for restoring the race of mankind, when their sins had brought upon them a deluge of water, whereby all but he and his family perished. Nor doth it appear that Melchizedec, the priest of the Most High God, was ever circumcised, and Christ was to be of this order. Nor was the sign of circumcision of any use to women, whereas all among us are baptized, and so wear the badge of their master's service.

§. 9. Thus saith Isaiah; In those days shall there be men who will seal the law, and bind up the testimony, that no more may teach from thence. And then shall you say, I will wait upon the Lord, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob; and I will trust in him. And thus we read in the evangelist St. Matthew; For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

§. 10. So the prophet Micah hath fairly intimated, where he saith, That a law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations. And to the same purpose we read in Isaiah; Out of Zion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he shall judge among the nations, &c. And who should be the person to promulge this law, the evangelist St. Matthew hath plainly declared, where he points us to the

These words we not read in our present copies. Only the syrie doth mention the age; that against the age God should circumcise their hearts; which is clearly enough to our author's point. These words are not read in our present copies. Only the syrie doth mention the age; that against the age God should circumcise their hearts; which is clearly enough to our author's point. In explicatione carnis, by spilling the flesh, or robbing it of its covering, saith our author; somewhat more intelligibly than our vulgar reading, which runs thus; stripping off the body of the sin by the flesh. Here our author follows the version of the LXX, who differ a little from our Vulgate version, as well as from the vulgar Latin, both which proceed thus; And up the testimony, that the law shall be fulfilled; and I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will seek for him. The syriack version is the only reading which doth agree with the LXX, and with our author. So that he sealed up the law and the prophets; they were to continue no longer in force than till his time.

voice

voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him. A.D. 248. Matt. 3. 17.

11. This the prophet Jeremiah hath clearly predicted, where he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. §. 11. That a new economy should succeed the old one. Jeremiah 31. 31, 32, 33, 34. Heb. 8. 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. the same quoted.

12. So the prophet Isaiah; Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old; behold I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth, and ye shall know it: I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in a dry place, to give drink to my people, my chosen, whom I have formed for my self, that they may shew forth my praise. And again; If they are a thirst, I will lead them thro' the desert, he shall cause the waters to flow out of the rock for them; the rock shall be cleft, and the waters shall gush out, and my people shall drink thereof. Thus in the gospel according to St. Matthew, John the Baptist is represented, saying, I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: And thus you also read in St. John's gospel, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. §. 12. That the old baptism was to cease, and a new one to commence. Isaiah 43. 18, 19, 20, 21. Isaiah 48. 21. Matt. 3. 11. John 3. 5, 6.

13. Thus you may read in the 118th Psalm; Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. Thus we likewise read in St. Matthew's gospel of our blessed Lord saying, Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Nor is what we read in the prophet Jeremiah foreign from our purpose; In that day will I break this yoke from off their neck, and will burst their bonds, and they shall no longer serve strangers, but §. 13. That the old law was to be annulled, and a new one to come in its room. Psalm 2. 1, 2, 3. Matt. 11. 28, 29, 30. Jeremiah 30. 8, 9.

[I regarded them not.] Our author here, as well as the author to the Hebrews, followeth the LXX; and our English reading of this passage in the Old Testament differeth a little from both of them. Instead of, I regarded them not, the vulgar Latin reads, *et ego dominatus sum coram eis*; wherewith the Hebrew also agreeth; i. e. I shewed them, by my usage of them, that I was their master. Our English reads it, *Thou art our husband unto them*; i. e. by way of aggravation; altho' God had been as tender to them as the kindest husband could have been; yet they broke his covenant, &c. Our author here followeth the LXX, who have expressed themselves in the future tense, where our English version proceeds in the preterperfect; and represents the cleaving of the rock, &c. as a matter of fact already past, which our author quotes from the LXX, in the prophetic way, and as a future event. The meaning perhaps might be of a mixed nature, and allude both to past and future; that since God had done so much; it was not at all incredible that he would do the same again; that he who had delivered us, would yet deliver us. Observe here (as elsewhere) in our author's citation of texts by way of proof to the Jews how he deduces the prophecy from the Old Testament, and then recurs to the New for the verification of the event. The New was indeed no argument to the Jews, any otherwise than as it tallied with the predictions of the Old, but the Jews (twice well known) disingenuously, till his Saviour's time, interpreted these prophecies as the Father's did, who originally received these interpretations from them; and so what seems to us in diverse instances less conclusive, was to them abundantly more so.

the birth of Christ. Bishop Fell.

§. 14.
That the old
pastors were
to be succeeded
by new ones.
Ezekiel 34. 10.

Jeremiah 3.
15. and 31.
10, 11.

That Christ
was to be the
house of God
and his temple,
and that the
old temple
was to end.
2 Samuel 7. 4,
5. and 12, 13,
16.
Matt. 24. 2.
John 2. 19.
and Mark 14.
58.

That the old sacrifices were to cease, and new ones to succeed them.
Isaiah I. II, 12.
Psalm 50. in our range of them, verses 14, 15 and 23.
Malachi, IO, 31.

That the old
priesthood was
temporary,
and to be suc-
ceeded by one
which should
last for ever.
Psal. 110. 3, 4.

which should
last for ever.
Psal. 110. 3, 4.

order of Melchisedec. Thus likewise we find God revealing himself to *Heli* the priest in the first book of *Samuel*; *And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever. And it shall come to pass that every one, who is left in thine house, shall come to worship with a single farthing, and with a morsel of bread.*

18. Thus in *Deuteronomy* God speaks to *Moses*; *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.* And our Saviour hath himself appeal'd in this case to the testimony of the scriptures: We read him saying in *St. John's* gospel; *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?*

19. Thus in *Genesis*; *And the Lord said unto Rebecca, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger. And to the same purpose in the prophet *Hosea*; *I will say to her that was not my people, Thou art my people; and to her that was not beloved, Thou art beloved. And again; It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.**

20. Thus in the prophet *Isaiah*; *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not, for thou shalt conquer at last; be not afraid, because thou hast lain under a reproach and curse, since thou shalt no more remember thy confusion, nor thy shame.* Thus when *Abraham* had a son by his handmaid *Hagar*, *Sarah* continued barren a good while afterwards, and at length in her old age she brought him forth a son, according to the promise which God had made to her; his name was *Isaac*, and he was a type of Christ. Thus *Jacob* also married two wives, the name of the elder was *Leah*, she was tender-eyed, and was a type of the Jewish synagogue; the younger's name was *Rachel*, she was well-favour'd, and was a type of the christian church; she continued a good while barren, and at last brought forth *Joseph*, who, as well as his grandfather *Isaac*, was also a type of Christ. Thus in the first book of *Samuel*, we read that *Elkanah* also had two wives; *Peninnah*, who had children; and *Hannah*, who for some time

¹ To worship with a single farthing, etc.] Here our English version and the LXX alike differ from our author. The reader shall have each of them laid before him. *Veniet adorare in obols pecunia, & in pane uno*, (saith our author;) shall come, and crouch to him (viz. the new priest) for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, (saith our English version;) and the LXX thus --- *ἔξω προκυνήσει αὐτῷ ἰσθλὸν ἀργύριον* where note, that our author points the prophesy most directly to Christ, and to the manner of his most solemn worship: The vulgar Latin thus --- *Futurum est autem, ut quicumque remanserit in domo tua veniat ut oretur pro eo, & offerat nummum argenteum, & sortam panis.* Both the Chaldean paraphrase and the Hebrew mention the faithful priest, the anointed, or the Christ, before whom it is prophesied that the remnant of *El's* house should come to worship, or should bow down to him.

² Shalt conquer.] Here our author differs a little from the version of the LXX, and more from our English reading. But the difference is in neither case very material.

A. D. 248. had none, but afterwards had *Samuel* born to her, not in the common course, but by the peculiar favour and promise of God, when she had prayed for that purpose in the temple; and so *Samuel* was born to her, and was likewise a type of Christ. Thus again we read, That *the barren hath born seven*, and *she that hath many children is waxed feeble*. Now the seven sons there, represent to us seven churches. And thus St. Paul directed his epistles precisely to seven churches, and the *Revelations* keep up to the same number; which was also the number of days spent upon the creation. Thus there are *seven angels*, which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One, as *Raphael* hath informed us in the book of *Tobit*. And in the tabernacle of testimony there were seven lamps; and the Lord is represented as with seven eyes, which look round the world; and there is mention of a stone with seven eyes upon it, in the prophet *Zechariah*; the spirits and the candlesticks in the *Revelations* are exactly seven; and so are the pillars in *Solomon*, upon which he represents *Wisdom* as building her house.

§. 21. Thus in *Genesis*; The Lord said unto *Abraham*, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and will make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. To this very purpose we read in the same book; And *Isaac* blessed *Jacob*, and said, See the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed; therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine; people shall serve thee, and nations shall bow down unto thee: Thou shalt be lord over thy brethren, and thy mother's sons shall bow down unto thee; whosoever curseth thee shall be cursed, and whosoever blesseth thee shall be blessed. And again; When *Joseph* saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of *Ephraim*, it displeased him, and he held up his father's hand to remove it from *Ephraim's* head unto *Manasse's* head. And *Joseph* said unto his father, Not so, my father, for this is the first born, put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. Once more consult this book upon this argument, and you will find it written, *Judah*, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: Thy hand shall be upon the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. *Judah* is a lion's whelp; thou art increased and grown up my son as from a tender bud; thou stoopest, thou couchest as a lion, and as a lion's whelp; Who shall dare to rouse thee up? The scepter shall not depart from *Judah*, nor a lawgiver

^a Seven churches.] Viz. Roman, Corinthian, Galatian, Ephesian, Philippian, Colossian, and Thessalonian.

^b The book of *Tobit*.] This is no proof of the book of *Tobit* being esteem'd by our author as canonical. It might only be used as an argument *ad hominem* to the hellenistick Jews, who paid great deference to the books which are now called apocryphal; or otherwise cited as a book of some authority, tho' far from scriptural. See what is said by our author in his book concerning alms and good works, §. 4. where he adds a proof, properly scriptural, to a quotation cited from *Tobit*, that he might (as he says) confirm it by the testimony of truth itself! The veneration of the ancients seems however to have been much greater for these apocryphal writings than what is at present paid to them; and the difference between them and canonical writings was less than it is now reputed. See note on §. 3. of the Lord's prayer, (*Holy Ghost suggested*, &c.) As the authority of the church had not then interposed for settling the sacred canon, it was not so nicely adjusted as in after-times. Yet some difference then was made, tho' perhaps not so great as now, between the writers, call'd by us apocryphal and canonical. Both however seem to have been then imputed to the Spirit of God, tho' not to a like degree and measure of inspiration.

^c As from a tender bud.] So our author and the LXX. to denote the increase of his strength from small beginnings; others, and among them our English version, render it, from the prey, to denote his fortitude: — But the Hebrew reads it a twig.

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from between his feet, until ^d Shiloh come, and in him shall the Gentiles A.D. 248.
trust. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses colt unto the choice
vine, he shall wash his garments in wine, and his cloaths in the blood of
grapes. His eyes shall sparkle with wine, and his teeth shall be white as
milk. Thus the book of Numbers hath spoken of our people; Behold, the Numb. 23. 24.
people shall rise up as a great lion: And that of Deuteronomy; The Gentiles Deut. 28. 44.
shall be the head, and my unbelieving people the tail. And the prophet Je-
remiah; Harken to the voice of the trumpet, but they said we will not Jerem. 6. 17,
hear; therefore shall the Gentiles hear, and ^e the shepherds amongst them
which feed their flocks. And the xviith [aliàs xviiith] psalm; Thou shalt Psal. 18. 43,
make me the head of the heathen, a people whom I have not known hath
served me; as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me. And again to the
same purpose Jeremiah hath represented the word of the Lord, saying, Be- Jer. 1. 5.
fore I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth
out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the
nations. And thus Isaiah; Behold I have given him for a witness to the Isaiah 55. 4.
people, a leader and a commander to the Gentiles. Behold, thou shalt call
a nation which thou knowest not, and nations which know not thee shall run
unto thee. And again; In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which Isai. 11. 10.
shall ^f rise up to rule over the Gentiles; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and
his rest shall be glorious. And again; ^g Thou, O land of Zebulon, and land
of Nephtalim, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, Isai. 9. 12.
a people yet walking in darkness, behold a great light; upon you, who have
sat in the region of the shadow of death, shall light shine. Again; Thus
saith the Lord God ^h to my anointed, whose right hand I have holden to Isai. 45. 1.
make the Gentiles obedient to him, and to loose the loins of Kings, and to
open the gates before him, and that the cities should not shut him out. Far-
ther yet; I come to gather all nations, people and languages, and they shall Isai. 66. 18.
come and see my glory. Again; For all this ⁱ they were not converted. -----
Therefore will he lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will ^k draw Isai. 5. 25, 26.
them to him from the end of the earth. And again; They ^l who have not Isai. 52. 15.
been told of him, and they who have not yet heard of him shall understand.
Once more; I am made known to them who sought me not; I am found of Isai. 65. 1.
them who asked not after me. I said, Behold me, unto a nation which had Cited Rom. 10.
not call'd upon my name. Thus in the Acts of the Apostles St. Paul is re-
presented, saying, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spo-
ken to you; but seeing ye have put it from you, and judg'd your selves un-
worthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so hath the Lord Ibid. 47.

^a Shiloh.] The LXX read it, *et ananias autem* what is reserved or destined for him. *Qua reposita sunt*, saith our author. *Justin* observ'd, that in his time the LXX read it, *et ananias* viz. *anania*. He for whom all things are reserv'd; He who is to finish the divine œconomy, who hath all power, &c. *Qui mittendus est*, (saith our vulgar Latin) He who is to be sent; other interpreters say, the Saviour, the Peace-maker, the prosperous Heroe. The Chaldees paraphrase expressly reads, the Messiah.

^c The shepherds, &c.] Here the LXX, with whom our author joins, are much clearer to the purpose for which this prophecy is cited than our English version; which runs thus — *Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them.* The vulgar Latin thus — *Ideo audite, gentes, et cognosce, congregatio, quanta ego faciam eis.*

^f Rise up to rule over the Gentiles.] This is likewise more clear to our author's purpose, who here again followeth the LXX, than our English version.

^g Thou, O land of Zebulon.] Here our author differs very much from our English version, as well as from the vulgar Latin; somewhat from the LXX, and a small matter from the quotation of this passage in the gospel, Matt. 4. 15, 16.

^h To my anointed.] The original intent of this prophecy related to Cyrus, who is expressly named in it; but 'tis evident that our author understood Cyrus herein to be a type of Christ.

ⁱ They were not converted.] Here the LXX and our English version read it, *His anger was not turn'd*. So doth the vulgar Latin: But the Chaldees paraphrase is with our author.

^k Draw them.] Here our author followeth the LXX. Our version as well as the vulgar Latin reads it, *His unto them*; the meaning is the same, calling them with an 'it'.

^l Who have not been told of him.] So the LXX, and our author, with the vulgar Latin; but our English version runs thus — *That which had not been told them shall they see, &c.* And so indeed the Hebrew reads it, with the Chaldees paraphrase.

A. D. 2. 8
Isai. 49. 6.

declared in holy scripture, saying, *I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*

§. 22.
That the Jews
were not to be
interested in
the covenant
of Christ nor
his sacra-
ments; and
that the new
name of chri-
stians was to
be blessed
throughout
the world.

Isaiab 55. 13.

15. 16.

Isai. 5. 26, 27.

Isai. 3. 1.

Psalm 34. 8, 9.

10.

John 6. 35.

John 7. 37, 38.

John 6. 53.

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22. In the prophet *Isaiah*; Thus saith the Lord, Behold my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: The Lord shall slay you, and call his servants by another name, which shall be blessed in the earth. Again in the place a little before cited; Therefore will he lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will draw them to him from the end of the earth, and behold they shall come with speed swiftly, they shall not hunger nor thirst. Thus again; Behold the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, shall take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread and the whole stay of water. Thus in the xxxiii^d [alias xxxivth] psalm; O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, all ye his saints; for there is no want to such as fear him. The rich men lack and suffer hunger, but they who seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Thus also we read our Lord declaring himself in the gospel of St. John; I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst. And again; If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Once more; Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye shall have no life in you.

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23. The Lord hath said in the gospel; Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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24. Thus we read in *Isaiah*; I will not release ye of your sins; when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide my face from you; when ye make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; tho' your sins be as purple, they shall be as white as snow; tho' they be red like crimson, they shall be as wooll. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

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^m Shall not hunger.] So the LXX; but our author adds, *Nor thirst*; neither of which are in our English version. Tho' what amounts to the same meaning is found both in our English version, and in the vulgar Latin — viz. the coming without delay, without staying to rest, or recruit; which is the importance of the Hebrew reading.

ⁿ Rich men.] This our English renders young lions; as *Jerom* and the *Chaldee* paraphrase had done; but the vulgar Latin is the same with the LXX, and with our author; so are the *Arabick* and *Syriac* versions.

^o I will not release ye.] Here our author, in following the LXX, differs from the vulgar Latin, as well as from the Hebrew, and our English version; all which read with the *Syriac* version, *I am weary to bear them* — (viz. the multitude of their ceremonial observances) or else (which will bring the sense to a nearer accommodation with the version of the LXX, and of our author) it may mean, That God was weary to bear any longer with their sins, notwithstanding the multitude of their oblations. The *Arabick* version reads thus — *I will not bear henceforward with your sins.*

against this to notwithstanding that the same sense is expressed in the LXX, and in our author.

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TESTIMONIES against the JEWS, addressed to the same QUIRINUS.

B O O K. II.

THUS Solomon saith in his proverbs; *The Lord hath ^a created me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; when there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water: Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth; whilst as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the inaccessible parts of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he fixed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him, contriving with him; I was daily his delight, and I rejoiced always before him; when he ^b was pleased at beholding the creation finished. Thus again in the book of Ecclesiasticus; ^c I came out of the mouth of the Most High, [before every creature. I made the light to arise without failure in the heavens] and covered the earth as a cloud; I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar. I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, and walked in the bottom of the deep, in the waves of the sea, and in every people and nation, I got a possession. [I enter'd into the hearts of the excellent and humble; all hope of life and of virtue centers in me. Come unto me all ye who desire me.] Thus in psalm lxxxviii, (alias lxxxix.) Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the Kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him. Observe also what ^d St. John hath written to this purpose; *This is life eternal, that**

A. D. 248.

§. 1.

That Christ was the first begotten and the wisdom of the Father, by whom all things were made.

Prov. 8. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

Eccles. 24. 3; 4, 5, 6.

Psalm 88. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

John 17. 3; 4, 5.

^a Created me.] Eusebius and Jerom contend, that instead of (*inchoans*) created, it should be read (*inchoans*) possessed me; the Hebrew text will well endure it; and our English version, with the vulgar Latin, hath so rendered it. But it must be confessed, that Philo Judaeus, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian and Origen, have all of them read it, *created*, with our author. The Arians however can conclude nothing hence for their opinion; since the generation here spoken of may still have been from everlasting; and is indeed expressly represented to have been so in the 23^d verse: Nor can we conceive an Eternal Father without an Eternal Son. Bishop Fell.

^b Was pleased at beholding, &c.] Here observe the LXX, whom our author followeth, differing from our English version, as well as from the vulgar Latin. Yet the LXX and our author stand countenanced by the Arabic, which renders the passage thus, — *When he rejoiced upon finishing the formation of the earth.*

^c I came out of the mouth.] What is here cited from Ecclesiasticus proves not that book canonical, any more than the citation from Tobit (in book i. of these Testimonies, §. 20.) proves *that* to be so. The reader may please to look back to what was observed upon that passage; and to what is farther said upon this book in §. 20. of book iii. of Testimonies. N. B. The passages enclosed within these hooks [] are not in our English version; nor in the LXX; but the vulgar Latin hath them.

^d St. John.] Once more I beg leave to observe, upon our author's citations from the New Testament, that tho' they were not proofs in themselves conclusive against the Jews; yet when it should be consider'd how aptly those passages in the New Testament agreed with the passages quoted from the Old, they could not but reflect upon each other a mutual light.

- A. D. 248. *they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* So St. Paul
- Coloss. i. 15, 18. *in his epistle to the Colossians styles our Saviour, The image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature. And again he calls him, The first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Thus*
- Revelat. 21. 6. *in the book of Revelations; I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. That he is the power and the wisdom of God, St. Paul hath*
- 1 Cor. i. 22, 23, 24. *clearly asserted in his first epistle to the Corinthians; For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them, which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*
- §. 2. *That Christ is the wisdom of God; and of his incarnation, passion and his sacramental institutions, and mission of a ministry.*
- Prov. 9. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *2. Thus Solomon in his book of Proverbs; Wisdom hath built her an house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine in the cup, she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her servants, she hath called with a loud voice to her cup, and said, Who so is simple, let him turn in hither to me; and as for them who want understanding, she hath said, Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled for you. Forsake your folly, seek after wisdom, and go in the way of understanding.*
- §. 3. *That Christ is the word of God.*
- Psal. 45. 1. *3. Thus in psalm xlv, (alias xlv.) My heart hath brought forth a good word, I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. And in the xxxiii^d (alias xxxiii^d) psalm; By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. And in Isaiah*
- Psal. 33. 6. *we have mention of consummating and briefly finishing a word in righteousness; because the Lord shall make such a word in the midst of all the earth.*
- Isaiah 10. 22, 23. *In psalm cvi, (alias cvii.) He sent his word and healed them. Thus in the*
- Psal. 107. 20. *gospel of St. John; In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.*
- John 1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made which was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. And*
- Revelat. 19. 11, 13. *again in the Revelations; And I saw heaven opened; and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in*

[Proverbs, &c.] The former chapter is plainly an introduction to this; now Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen and Tertullian, as well as our author, do clearly make the former chapter allusive to Christ. Here therefore our author hath taken a farther liberty, and hath made what is here said farther of wisdom, allusive to the mysteries and managements of Christ's church. Bishop Fell.

[To her cup.] i. e. hath invited to her feast. So the LXX and our author; which brings the passage a good deal nearer to his interpretation of it, than it seems to be in our English version; which renders it -- upon the highest places of the city. The vulgar Latin reads it, *misi ancillas suas ut venirent ad arcem & ad mania civitatis*; by which seems to have been intended the publick nature of the invitation.

[My heart hath brought forth a good word.] (So the LXX.) The Nicene fathers are unmercifully scouted by the Arians for producing this text in proof of our Lord's Divinity. But why? They were to shew, that they interpreted the scriptures, as their predecessors had done before them. Now Tertullian, 'tis apparent, understood and applied this text as our author hath done. And the author to the Hebrews, (Heb. 1. 8.) Justin Martyr, Origen, and indeed almost all the fathers, who have taken any notice of it, are unanimous in applying the psalm to Christ. Nay and even the Jews themselves, the Chaldee Paraphrast, R. Kimchi, Solem. Jarchi, and Aben-Ezra, have done the same. Bishop Fell.

[Consummating, &c.] This is totally different from our English version. Our author here followeth the LXX; but the vulgar Latin reads, *consummatio abbreviata inundabit justitiam*: i. e. the elect-remnant of the Jews should abound in righteousness. It must indeed be confessed that the fathers were extremely forward in applying to Christ every passage of the Old Testament which contained any mention of the Word: But then they had better precedents for so doing, than what are generally apprehended; they had the usage of their predecessors, and the allowance of those whom they labour'd to convince by such citations and constructions, to bear them out. See this passage cited again and noted in §. 17 of the Lord's prayer. N. B. St. Paul, Rom. 9. 28. mentions this passage with a light variation, which yet would quite spoil our author's turn of it; the apostle mentions, finishing a work in righteousness, and applies it plainly to the remnant of Israel.

righte-

righteousness he doth judge and make war. — And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called the WORD of GOD. A. D. 248.

4. In *Isaiab*; ¹ Behold the hand of the Lord is not shortned, that it can- §. 4.
not save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities That Christ is
have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face the Hand and
from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, Arm of God.
and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath *Isaiab* 59. 1,
uttered perverseness: None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; 2, 3, 4.
they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth
iniquity. And again; Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom *Isaiab* 53. 1.
hath the arm of God been revealed? Yet farther; Thus saith the Lord, The Cited *John* 12.
heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what house will ye build 38.
unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath my *Rom.* 10. 16.
hand made. Again; O Lord, ^k thy hand is high and exalted, yet they did *Isai.* 66. 1, 2.
not know it; but when they shall know it, they shall be ashamed. And again; Cited *Acts* 7.
The Lord hath made bare his arm, that Holy One, in the sight of all the 48.
Gentiles; and all the Gentiles, even to the ends of the earth, shall see the *Isai.* 26. 11.
salvation of God. Once more; Behold, I will make thee a new sharp *Isai.* 52. 10.
threshing-instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and *Isai.* 41. 15,
beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, 16, 17, 18,
and the hills shall carry them away, and the whirl-wind shall scatter them, 19, 20.
and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.
When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue
faileth thro' thirst, then shall they also rejoice; for I am the Lord God, I
the God of Israel will hear them, and will not forsake them. I will open
rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will
make of the wilderness a water'd grove, and in the dry land will I make
springs of water. I will set in the desert, the cedar, and the box, and the
myrtle, and the cypress, and the poplar-tree together; that they may see,
and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord
hath done this, and that the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

5. In the book of *Genesis*; The angel of the Lord called unto him out of §. 5.
heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said here am I. And he That the an-
said gel who ap-
pear'd to the
patriarchs is
Christ and
God.

ⁱ Behold the hand of the Lord, &c.] It may here be fit to acquaint the unlearned reader, that where the difference between our author and our English version is not material, I often give him the words of our English version, because I suppose them most familiar to him. And I think my self at liberty so to do, because tho' I would not willingly misrepresent my author's sense in any thing of consequence, yet I do not propound to give a mere literal translation of him. Our author hath render'd this in the interrogatory form; Is the hand of the Lord shortned? &c. as the LXX had done before him; and the Arabick version follows them.

^k Thy hand is high.] St. Jerom upon this passage, tho' he departs from the LXX, whom our author follows, acknowledgeth in his comment that it may be understood of the Jews, who knew not Christ, the Arm of the Lord. The Chaldees paraphrase makes upon the matter the same acknowledgment. And Justin Martyr in his second apology, and in his book against Trypho, interprets the Arm of the Lord to be Christ. So doth Tertullian, in his book against Praxeas, and of the resurrection. (Bishop Fell.) What follows in the next citation from *Isaiab* 52. 10. contains a very clear reference of the Arm of the Lord to Christ, as our author hath worded it. The Lord hath made bare his Arm, that Holy One, (revelavit Dominus, brachium suum, illum sanctum, (saith our author;) where it is impossible that illum sanctum being masculine, should agree with brachium which is neuter. So that illum sanctum, that Holy One, must refer to a person, not a thing; altho' the LXX have left this matter dubious, because the Greek of brachium (*βραχίον*) is masculine, and so what follows may refer indifferently either to thing or person. The Words of the LXX run thus — ἀποκαλύψαι χεῖρα τοῦ βραχίονα τοῦ ἁγίου αὐτοῦ ἵνα πᾶσι πάντων τῶν ἰσθῶν but our author here hath a little departed from them, — and it must be acknowledged, that both in the Hebrew and oriental versions this distinction is left unascertain'd.

§. 5.] The importance of this § arises hence. When we prove that the incommunicable attributes of God are ascribed in holy scripture to Jesus Christ, we think we prove him to be very God. But 'tis apparent, that no such conclusion can be grafted upon these premisses, if it be agreed, that the angel was only a common ministering spirit who appeared to the patriarchs, because those incommunicable attributes are ascribed very often to that angel. Therefore the whole current of the first fathers is in nothing more unanimous, than in a full consent that this angel was Christ. The learned reader will find it to be so, upon observation made of it; and may consult Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 2. Dialogue with Trypho. Irenaeus, b. 3. c. 6. b. 4. c. 17. and 26. Clemens Alexandrinus *Padag.* b. 1. c. 7. Tertullian against the Jews, c. 9. and against Marcion, b. 2. c. 27. and against Praxeas, c. 16. Origen upon *Isaiab*, hom. 1. And if he goes lower, the fathers of the following ages will be found of the same opinion,

A. D. 248. said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. Again in the case of Jacob; The angel of the Lord spake unto me in a dream, saying, I am the God who appeared unto thee in the place of God, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me. Thus in Exodus; The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire. Again; And the angel of the Lord, which went before the camp of Israel, removed. And again; Behold I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice; do not provoke him, and then he will not forsake you, for my name is in him. And agreeable hereunto is what Christ hath said of himself in the gospel; I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Thus in the psalm; Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord. And again in the prophet Malachi; My covenant of life and peace was with him, and I gave unto him to fear my name, and to go forth from my presence. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the lips of the priest should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

§. 6. 6. In the book of Genesis, God is represented as saying to Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there, and make there an altar unto God, that God, who appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. So in Isaiah; Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the labour of Egypt, and merchandise of the Ethiopians, and of the Sabians, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thy servants, they shall come after thee in chains; and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, (saying) Surely God is in thee, and there is none other God but thou. Verily thou art God, and we knew it not, even the God of Israel our Saviour. They shall be ashamed and confounded, all they who set themselves up against thee; they shall go to confusion together. Again; The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert an high-way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Thus in Jeremiah; This is our God, and

nion. (Bishop Fell.) And indeed the very sacred text it self bears some testimony to this general interpretation of it. For he who is called the Lord God of Abraham, as distinguished from the angels of God, Gen. 28. 13. (see also verses 18 and 19 of that chapter) is called the angel of God, Gen. 31. 11, and 13.

• The place.] So the LXX. Our version reads Bethel. As do the Hebrew and Oriental versions.

• Will not forsake.] Our English with the Hebrew reads it, will not pardon you.

• To go forth from my presence, &c.] Here our English reads it, I gave them to him for the fear where-with he feared me, and was afraid before my name. But the LXX and our author speak more fully to the mission of priests in the words which I have laid before the reader. This passage is cited as typical; it referred originally to Levi, and his tribe, who herein were types of Christ, and of his prophetic office. The vulgar Latin is here pretty much the same with our English reading.

• That God.] The LXX read it emphatically with the article twice repeated, ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός, our author follows them, as I have done him in my translation. And indeed with the emphasis so given to the words, they are stronger than they would otherwise be for the purpose to which they are quoted. The same words are cited by Justin Martyr against Trypho. (Bishop Fell.) The Arabick version reads, The Almighty who manifested his angel unto thee, &c.

• God is in thee, and there is none other God but thou.] This, as referred to Christ by our author, proves at least his opinion of Christ's being very God. The Deity not only dwelt in him, (which was the Nestorian heresy) but if there were no God but he, (as this Scripture when applied to him clearly proves) then must he be very God of very God.

• Baruch and Jeremiah.] Our author confounds these two together; taking what is found in Baruch for Jeremiah's; I suppose because Baruch was Jeremiah's scribe.

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there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of him. He hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his servant, and to Israel his beloved. Afterward did he shew himself upon earth, and conversed with men. And in Zechariah God is represented saying, They shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up, and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away; and I will strengthen them in the Lord their God, and in his name shall they make their boast, saith the Lord. Again in Hosea; I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger; I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the city. I will walk after the Lord. Thus in psalm xlv, (alias xlv.) Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And again in the psalm following; Be still, and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth. And in psalm lxxxi, (alias lxxxii.) They know not, neither will they understand: They shall walk on in darkness. Once more in the lxviiith (alias lxviiith) psalm; Sing unto God, sing praises to his name, make way for him, who rideth up towards the west, God is his name. Thus also we read in St. John's gospel; In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. And again in the same evangelist our Saviour saith to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed. Likewise St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans; For I could wish that my self were even accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore. Thus in the book of Revelations; I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end; I will give unto him that is a-thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. And in the lxxxiith (alias lxxxii^d) psalm; God standeth in the congregation of Gods, he judgeth among the Gods. And again; I have said, Ye are Gods, and all of ye are children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men. Now if

[Shew himself.] Compare this with Proverbs 8. 31. where wisdom represents her self as rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and conversing with the sons of men: And with John 1. 14. where the word is said to have been made flesh, and to have dwelt amongst us.

[Make way, &c.] So the LXX, and our author; instead of our English reading, which follows the Hebrew more literally, and gives it thus; Magnify him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH; where we may observe, how much stronger the passage is for Christ, as given us by the LXX and our author, than as our English version hath exhibited it.

[Rideth up.] Ascendit in occasum, saith our author from the LXX; as interpreting the prophesy of the progress of the christian religion from the eastern towards the western parts of the world. The vulgar Latin reads it with our author. And so do the Arabic and Syriac versions.

[Who is over all, God blessed for evermore.] 'Tis evident here that our author was not of the same opinion with some moderns, who are for putting the words God blessed, &c. in a sort of parenthesis; and adding, against all rule and the plain sense of the passage, God is to be blessed, &c. as if St. Paul were there inserting an ejaculatory expression of praise to God. The Greek puts the word God in apposition with Christ; and our author hath delivered himself yet more explicitly by adding the words, qui est, as our English version hath done, who is blessed, &c. God blessed for evermore was a solemn form of praise in the Jewish worship, exhibited to none but the Supreme Being. So that the application of it to Christ, represents him to us in no less character. N. B. Irenaeus in his third book and 18th chapter, hath cited the passage to this purpose; and most of all, Tertullian against Praxeas, §. 13, and 15. Bishop Fell.

[These things.] All things, say most copies; but some, which our author had seen and here follows, read it, these things. (Bishop Fell.) N. B. The Alexandrian copy reads it with our author.

A. D. 148. righteous persons, who paid due obedience to the laws of God, might with any degree of fitness and decency be entituled Gods; how much more might Christ, the son of God, be styled God in his own person? So our Saviour himself (we find) argued in the gospel from this very passage; *If (saith he) he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, tho' ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.* And again in the evangelist St. Matthew; *Ye shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

§. 7. Thus we read in Isaiah; *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; say to them who are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And again; No messenger, nor angel, but the Lord himself shall deliver them; because he will love them, and spare them, and redeem them. Yet farther; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them who sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Thus in the xxivth (alias xxvth) psalm; *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths; lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation.* Hence our Saviour hath said of himself in the gospel; *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Thus in the gospel of St. Matthew we read of the angel Gabriel, saying unto Joseph; *Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.* Thus in St. Luke; *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. And again in the same evangelist we find the angel saying to the shepherds; Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**

§. 8. In the ii^d psalm; *The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.* Thus in the gospel according to St. Luke; *And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and she spake out with a loud voice and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy*

12.] Our present copies read it, *they*.

* No messenger, &c.] The latitude of the Hebrew language, and thence the equivocal and undetermined signification of many words in it, is often the reason why the LXX differ so much from our English version, which is taken directly from the present Hebrew. Tho' there is reason besides for suspecting that the Jews have in diverse places altered those readings, which point most strongly to Christ our Saviour. Here our English reads it, *The angel of his presence saved them*, and so doth the vulgar Latin. Our author here, as usually, followeth the LXX. (N. B. Tertullian against Marcion, book 4 chap. 22, claims this prophecy as belonging to Christ, and followeth the LXX, as well as our author Bishop Pol.) The Hebrew reads it as we do. *The angel of his face or presence*; so doth the Chaldee paraphrast, and the Syriac version; but the Arabic followeth the LXX. *godly* against *god*, *if* *best*

womb.

womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Thus St. Paul to the Galatians; But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. And to the same purpose we read in the epistle of St. John; Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit which confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God, but is of the spirit of antichrist. A. D. 248. Galat. 4. 4.

9. Thus in Isaiah; Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; it will be a small thing with you to contest with men, when God himself enters upon the proof of you. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and ye shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, till he groweth up to years of maturity, and knoweth how to refuse the evil, and chuse the good. God had indeed foretold before, That the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the devil, in the book of Genesis; where we read, That the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattel, and above every beast of the field: Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the woman; and between thy seed and her seed; it shall watch thy head, and thou shalt watch his heel. §. 9. That the sign of his nativity was to be, his being born of a virgin. Isai. 7. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Gen. 3. 14, 15.

10. Thus in Jeremiah; He is a man, and who shall know him? And in Numbers; There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a man shall rise out of Israel. And again in the same chapter; There shall come a man from his seed, and shall rule over many nations; his dominion shall be high as Gods, and his kingdom shall be exalted; God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath, as it were, the strength of an unicorn; he shall eat up the nations his enemies; he shall take out their marrow, and their fatness from them, and shall pierce them thro' with his arrows. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a lion's whelp; who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that bleth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee. Farther yet in the prophet Isaiah; The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me, to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to give sight to the blind; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of retribution of §. 10. That Christ was God and man, that he might be the sifter to be a mediator between them. Jerem. 17. 9. Num. 24. 17. And ibid. v. 7, 8, 9. Isai. 61. 1, 2.

* Enters upon the proof of you.] Deus praeat agonem; so our author; the LXX follow here the Hebrew, and read it with an interrogation, If you cannot contest with men, how will ye wish God? and so Justin Martyr read it; but Irenaeus and Tertullian read it as our author hath done. (Bishop Fell.) The sense seems rather to be with our English version, which is supported by the Hebrew, and by other versions; It is a small thing for you to weary men: viz. with holding out obstinately against the convictions given you by the prophets and messengers of God: But will ye contend with, or offer to weary my God also? viz. God himself exhibiting to you the miracle I am going to foretel.

b Till he groweth up, &c.] This I conceive to be the design of the prophet, viz. to represent the person, who was to be born of a virgin, as truly a partaker of human nature; and so to describe him, as growing up in the common forms of an infant-state, eating butter and honey, and ignorant of the difference between good and evil. This I suppose to have been our author's meaning, tho' he hath expressed it a little obscurely, *Prisquam cognoscat, ut praeferat mala, commutabit bonum*; which (as the learned bishop Fell hath observed) was the reading of Irenaeus, and seems to come pretty near the meaning of the LXX.

c Watch.] Our author reads it *observabis*, from the LXX, who read it now, and did then read it, *regnum* tho' in all likelihood it was originally the error of the scribe, for *regnum* i. e. as we now translate it, *bruise*.

d A man.] The heart of man (saith our English version, and so saith the Hebrew) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? Tertullian hath cited this text in our author's manner; and to our author's purpose, — *Advers. Judaeos. De Carne Christi. Advers. Marcion, lib. 3.* (Bishop Fell.) The vulgar Latin is almost the same with our English; and so is the Chaldaee paraphrast; but the Syrian comes a little nearer to our author.

e A man from his seed.] So the LXX; — *He shall pour the water out of his buckets*, our English version and the vulgar Latin say, — *Now, Aqua de fudat*; or, *Water out of a bucket*; was, among the Hebrews, a proverbial speech, signifying the common derivation of children from their parents. (Bishop Fell.) The Chaldaee paraphrast reads it, *There shall grow up a King, who shall be anointed, out of his children*.

A. D. 1248. *our God.* Thus we read, in the gospel, *Gabriel's address to Mary*; The angel answered and said unto her, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy One, who shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Thus likewise in *St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians* we read, *That the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also who are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly.*

Thus in the second book of *Samuel*; *The Word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in; but when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom: He shall build an house for my name; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son; and his house and his kingdom shall be established before me for ever.* In *Isaiah*; *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and piety, and the fear of the Lord.* Thus again in the *cxxxii^a (alias cxxxii^b) psalm*; *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*

Agreeable to this purpose is what we read in the gospel according to *St. Luke*; *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God; and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus: He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* Thus also we read in the book of the *Revelations*; *And I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open the book, nor to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold the lyon of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

Thus we read in the prophet *Micah*; *And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, art not the least among the thousands of Judah, for out of thee shall come forth unto me, one to be a ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting.* Agreeable to this prophecy is the event which we find recorded by the evangelist; *When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

[Established.] *Fidem consequitur*, saith our author: The LXX read it *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ* which bishop Fell conjectures to have been written by them originally *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ* i. e. I will settle him in my house, as we now read it; or (as our author's version seems to imply) his house shall be established as firmly, as if it had an oath for its security: Or perhaps our author's true meaning might refer to their coming into the faith of the gospel.

[Art not the least.] The Hebrew seems rather to favour our construction, which is quite contrary, *The thou art the least*; and yet even then the sense of the prophecy would be much the same, as not turning upon those words, but upon the words which follow, and which foretel a ruler's coming thence. The LXX agree with our version, and with what the Hebrew seems most to favour. But our author hath given us this prophecy, as it is cited by *St. Matthew*, chap. 2, verse 6. And *R. Tanchum*, a learned Jew, hathouched for *St. Matthew*, that his citation of this text is the truest reading. Bishop Fell.

13. Thus in *Isaiah*; Lord who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? ^h We treated him like a child, his appearance was like that of a root in a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ^{*} sins; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. And again in the same prophet we read farther; I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the rods, and my cheeks to the smiters, and I hid not my face from shame and spitting; for the Lord God will help me. Once more in the same prophet; He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets; a bruised reed shall he not break, nor quench the smoking flax, but he shall bring forth judgment unto truth; he shall not be crushed, nor discouraged, till he hath set judgment in the earth, and the Gentiles shall believe in his name. Thus in the *xxist* (*alias* *xxii^d*) *psalm*; But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, and shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. And again a little farther; My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws. Thus in the prophet *Zechariah*; And the Lord shewed me ⁱ *Jesus*, [†] that great High-Priest, and *satan* standing at his right hand to resist him. Now *Jesus* was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him, (and unto him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee) and give him change of raiment; put him on a long gown, and set a fair mitre upon his head. Agreeable to this description of our High-Priest is what *St. Paul* hath observed of him; where he thus describes him; *Who being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, yet humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that *Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

14. Thus in the ^k *Wisdom of Solomon*; Let us lie in wait for the righteous, because he is not for our turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings:

^h We treated him, &c.] So long as the prophecy is expressed in words, which retain the sense designed by it, and set forth the humiliation of *Christ*, the difference between one version and another is not very material. *Annunciavimus coram ipso sicut pueri, sicut radix in terra siccanti.* So our author, and the *LXX.* The *Hebrew* gives a greater latitude; and so our version, which is taken from it, reads it, He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground; which aptly enough introduces what follows, *That he had no form nor comeliness, &c.* such plants and roots seldom growing up to any advantageous form. The intent of both versions being therefore the same, I take the liberty in the remainder of this citation to follow our *English*, as what is most familiar to the unlearned reader: Only ^{*} *sins* in the fourth verse being more emphatical than *sorrows*, which is our *English* reading, the reader there hath our author's expression as most significant.

ⁱ *Jesus* that great High-Priest.] *Justin Martyr* against *Trypho*, and *Tertullian*, both against the *Jews* and against *Marcion*, (book iii. chap. 7.) concur with our author in ascribing this prophecy to *Christ* our Lord, (Bp. Fell.) And the article prefixed in the *LXX.* is more emphatical than our [†] *English* version; as, in our own language, *that great High-Priest*, is more significant than simply, *the High-Priest*.

^k *Wisdom of Solomon.*] If it was our author's design (as it should seem to have been) to establish any truth of christianity upon this passage in the book of *Wisdom*, or to represent any such truth as therein predicted

A.D. 248.
§. 13.

That in his first advent he was to be humbled.

Isai. 53. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Cited *John* 12. 38.

And *Rom.* 10. 16.

Isai. 50. 5, 6, 7. literally verified according to our author's version.

Matt. 26. 67. and 27. 30.

Isai. 42. 2, 3, 4. applied and cited *Matt.* 12. 19, 20, 21.

Psal. 22. 6, 7, 8, and 15.

Zechar. 3. 1, 3, 4, 5.

Philip. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

See this passage cited again and noted in §. 39 of the third book of Testimonies.

§. 14.

That he, whom the

Jews were to kill, was to be a just person.

He *Wisdom* 2. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22.

A. D. 248. He upbraideth us with our offending the law; he professeth to have the knowledge of God, and he calleth himself the Child of the Lord; he was made to reprove our thoughts; he is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another fashion. We are esteemed of him as counterfeits; he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness; he pronounceth the end of the just to be blessed, and maketh his boast that God is his Father. Let us see if his words be true, and let us prove what shall happen in the end of him: Let us examine him with despatchfulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience: Let us condemn him with a shameful death. Such things did they imagine, and were deceived, for their own wickedness hath blinded them; and as for the mysteries of God, they knew them not. Thus in Isaiah; ¹ The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away; none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace, and rest in his bed. That of Exodus carries with it a sort of propheticall allusion, as well as merely a precept; The innocent and righteous thou shalt not slay. And agreeable to the foregoing predictions is the acknowledgment made by Judas when he had betrayed our Saviour, as we find it recorded by St. Matthew; Judas repented himself, and said to the chief priests and elders, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.

Isai. 57. 1, 2. Thus in Isaiah; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers, is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. ² In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken; and he ³ made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Therefore shall he gain many, and shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was number'd with the transgressors, and bare the sins of many, and was delivered up for their offences. Thus in Jeremiah; Lord give me knowledge of it, and I shall know it; and then I saw their doings. I was like a lamb which is brought to the slaughter; against me they devised their devices, saying, Come, and let us ⁴ put poyson into his food, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more in

predicted, he must then have esteemed this book as one written with some degree of inspiration from God. See what was observed upon the book of Tobit in the first book of Testimonies, §. 20. But observe, that the main weight of his proof in this §. lies upon the testimony deduced from the book of Wisdom. See §. 17. of the plague, note, Holy Ghost by the mouth of Solomon.

The righteous perisheth.] Justin Martyr in Apol. 2. and Dial. with Trypho, Tenax, b. iv. c. 67. and Trevelian against Marcion, b. iii. ch. 22. do all agree with our author, in referring this prophecy to Christ our Saviour. Bishop Fell.

In his humiliation.] So the LXX, and our author; and St. Luke quotes the passage as they do, Acts 8. 33. I suppose the meaning to be, that in the midst of his humiliation, when in human appearance he seemed at lowest, then was he taken away, i. e. rescued, from his unjust judgment. For the prophet rises here in his character, and begins to represent him in his triumph; Who shall declare his generation? as he immediately goes on.

Made his grave with the wicked.] If this prophecy be allowed to predict the circumstances of our Saviour's death, all will be easy, according to our English version of the Hebrew, tho' it will be hard to determine precisely, what the LXX meant, or our author, who followed them, *dedit eis corpus suum* *dedit malis, pro sepultura ejus*. When our Saviour died, and in all the circumstances, which preceded his burial, and led him to the grave, wicked hands were only concerned; he was brought to his grave, was taken, crucified, and slain by them. But *in* or after his death, he was with the rich, Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, having *togged* his body, and *wrapped* it in a clean linen cloth, and *laid* it in his own new tomb, Matt. 27. 57, 58, 59, 60. N. B. Trinitar, in his comment upon this passage, interprets *dedit implet pro sepultura, &c.* (which is the reading of the vulgar Latin) as allusive to the efficacy of Christ's death, to the despoiling the powers of darkness, and gathering a church of faithful people.

Let us put poyson.] This seems the most natural and easy reading, and is indeed a more literal version than our English, which hath it, *Let us destroy the tree, with the fruit thereof*. Our author's misinterpretation followeth the LXX; the Rabbins pretended to tell you, that this wood was *Tew*, which was the tree whereof arrows were made; and these being frequently tipped with poyson, *toxiuum* (poyson) received its name from *taxus*, the *Tew tree*, of which arrows or darts were made. Bp. Fell. *Let us put poyson.*

remembrance. Thus in Exodus God ordains; Let every man take to him a lamb, throughout all the families of the tribes of Israel, a lamb for an house. ^{A. D. 248. Exod. 12. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.} Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts, and on the threshold of the houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night rost with fire; and they shall eat unleavened bread with bitter herbs. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden with water, but rost with fire; his head with his legs, and with the appurtenances thereof. Ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning, and a bone of it ye shall not break; and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and ye shall eat it in haste; for it is the Lord's passover. Thus in the book of Revelations; And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, ^{Revel. 5. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.} and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sate upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints: And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto God kings and priests, and they shall reign upon the earth. Thus also we read in the evangelist; The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. ^{John 1. 29.}

16. In the prophet Isaiah we find the Lord thus saying; Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone; a sure foundation; and he that believeth in it, shall not be ashamed. Thus in the cxviiith (alias cxviiith) psalm; The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner: It was made by God, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us walk in it, and be glad: Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And in Zechariah; Behold, I bring forth my servant, and his name is the East: For behold the stone which I laid before Joshua; upon one and the same stone are seven eyes. And the book of Deuteronomy prefigures to us the same; Thou shalt write upon the stone, all the words of this law very plainly. So doth Joshua the son of Nun, where he is represented as taking up a great stone, and setting it up over against the sanctuary of the

^{¶ A Bone of it ye shall not break.} Our version hath not this, nor the present Hebrew; but the LXX read it thus; and our author, according to his custom, followeth them. What St. John hath mentioned in his gospel (ch. 19. ver. 26.) of the scriptures being fulfilled, when a bone of our Saviour's was not broken, may with greater probability and perspicuity be referred to this passage, than as it is usually referred to Psal. 34. 20.

^{¶ It was made by God.} viz. The head of the corner; for no other word will agree with *ἐστὶν ὁ ἀκέραιος λίθος* which are the words of the LXX, and quoted from them by St. Mark, ch. 12. 11. which therefore hath much the same meaning with that of our English version; It was the Lord's doing; viz. That the stone became the head of the corner. See this passage cited to another purpose in §. 21. of the Lord's Prayer.

^{¶ The East.} *Ανατολή* say the LXX, with our author; we read it *Branch*, somewhat arising out of a very inconsiderable beginning.

^{¶ Deuteronomy and Joshua.} What is cited from these two passages, and applied, or rather accommodated by way of allusion to Christ, may seem to us at this distance somewhat forced and hard, who know not the particular opinions of the persons to whom these proofs were addressed, nor how much they might be accustomed to allow of these figurative applications made from passages in the Old Testament. These might then be arguments *ad hominem*, how unconvulsive soever they may now appear to us. Bishop Fell hath well observed here, that St. Paul hath an allusion almost as bold, 1 Cor. 10. 4. where he saith of the Israelites, that they did all drink the same spiritual drink, (for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ.)

Lord;

- A. D. 248. Lord, and saying unto the people, This Stone shall be a witness unto you; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto you; and it shall be a witness unto you in the latter days, when ye shall depart from the Lord your God. Thus in the Acts of the Apostles, agreeably to the fore-mentioned types and figures, Peter is represented, saying, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, behold, we are this day examined, of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole: Be it known (therefore) unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him, and by none other, doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner: For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. The stone which we read of Jacob's applying to his head (in the book of Genesis) doth not unfitly typify to us the Stone which hath here been mentioned; since Christ is the head of man. When he was asleep, 'tis said, That he saw in his dream a ladder reaching to heaven, at the top of which stood the Lord, and angels ascended it. Which Stone (the context tells us) he dedicated to God, and poured oil upon the top of it; by the ceremony of unction making it to be significant of Christ. To this again that stone is no improper allusion, upon which Moses sat at the top of an hill, when Joshua fought with Amalek; and thus under the type of Amalek being conquered by Joshua; under the sign of a stone, and of sitting thereupon, the thing signified to us, is the conquest of the devil by Christ our Lord: Which is again represented to us in a figure by that Stone, whereupon the ark of the covenant was put, when it was brought back from the Philistines in a new cart by the milch kine. And of this we are yet again reminded, where we read of David smiting Goliath in his forehead with a stone, and killing him; which is a strong and lively emblem of the victory gained over satan and all his servants, and exhibits them to us as wounded in the very part which is not fortified (like ours) with the defensive sign of the cross; thro' the power of which we apprehend our selves to live in safety. Once more; this Stone is brought again to our remembrance, where Samuel (after having discomfited the Philistines) is said to have took a stone and to have set it between Mispah and Shen, and to have called it Eben-Ezer, which signifies an auxiliary stone.
- §. 17. Thus in the prophet Daniel; Behold a great image; this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; its head was of fine gold; its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass; its feet, part of iron and part of clay; thou sawest, till that a Stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, which smote the image upon its feet (which were partly of iron and partly of clay) and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them; and the Stone

[Behold.] Our author seems to have read *idē*. Behold, instead of *ei*. If, as our present copies read it. Bishop Fell.

[Defensive sign, &c.] I think I have given my reader our author's true meaning; he shall have however our author's words, and try if he can make for himself any other construction of them. — Significans diabolum & servos ejus inde prosterni, victos scilicet ad caput parte quam signatam non habent. — That man was to bruise the head of the serpent was the original curse of God upon that beast, Gen. 3. 15. Goliath here is made an allusion to the devil, (that old serpent;) and he is represented receiving his wound in the forehead; The part (saith our author) which is not sign'd. Sign'd, with what? Why, surely with the sign of the cross! which is a manifest reference to the usage of it in baptism; since that was the great preservative of christians against satan. Tertullian often refers to the use of it upon other occasions; as at going to bed, *ad uxorem*, ch. 5. at going out and coming in; at lighting candles; at washing and cloathing; in almost every occurrence of life, *De Coron. Militis*, ch. 3. and can we think it then left out in the most material transaction of all? A gesture which was reverentially used at every washing, can we think omitted at the solemn laver of regeneration? *Credas Judas Apella, non ego*. — See what is farther written by our author upon this subject in §. 22. and in his book of the Unity of the Church, §. 15. and §. 2. of the case of the lapsed; and §. 13. to Demetrian.

which

which smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. A. D. 248.

18. Thus in the prophet *Isaiah*; *It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be revealed in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go up, and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, neither shall they learn war any more.* Thus again in the *xxiii^d (aliàs xxivth) psalm*; *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour; he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him, of them that seek thy face, O Jacob.* §. 18. That in the latter days this mountain should be manifested, and the Gentiles should get up into it. *Isaiah* 2. 2, 3, 4. *Psalm* 24. 3, 4.

* 19. Thus we read in the prophet *Joel*; *Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, and those who suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.* In *Jeremiah*; *Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.* And in the *xviiith (aliàs xixth) psalm*; *He is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course.* His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of the earth, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. Thus in the book of *Revelations*; *Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife: And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.* Agreeable to all this is what *St. John* hath recorded in his gospel concerning our blessed Saviour; *Ye your selves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but I am sent before him. He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.* This whole mystery is typified to us in the book of *Joshua*, where he is commanded to loose his shoe, as not being the bridegroom: For it was an ordinance of the *Mosaick law*, that he who (in a certain case) should refuse marriage, should have his shoe loosed, but the bridegroom might have his on. Thus then we find it written in the foresaid book; *And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lift up his eyes and looked; and behold there stood a man over against him with a sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? and he said, As captain of the Host of the Lord am I come. And Joshua fell on his face to* §. 19. That Christ is the bridegroom, and the church his bride, from whom he should have many children. *Joel* 2. 15, 16. *Jer.* 16. 9. *Psalm* 19. 5, 6. *Revelat.* 21. 9, 10, 11. *John* 3. 28, 29. *Deut.* 25. 9, 10. *Joshua* 5. 13, 14, 15.

[*Isaiah*.] This passage is strongly urged by *Tertullian* against the Jews, ch. 3. and against *Marcion*, b. 3. ch. 21. *Bishop Fell*.

§. 19. The three first prophecies cited here, could certainly prove nothing of what they are brought for, except only *ad hominem*; and to such as already acknowledged the propriety of their application to our author's purpose. Yet (as *bishop Fell* hath observed) the second of them is applied by *St. Jerom* in his commentaries, as our author hath applied it; and the third by *Tertullian* against *Marcion*, b. 4. ch. 11. What the said bishop hath observed upon the first of them, as if it were applied *Acts* 2. 19. after our author's manner, is, I fear, a mistake. *Joel* 2. from the 28th to the end, is indeed cited in *Acts* 2. 16, &c. but not the passage of *Joel* 2. 15. which our author here insists on. And those two citations from *Joel* (tho' in the same chapter, yet) are not so connected, as that they must needs allude to the same point. The latter of them begins thus, — *It shall come to pass afterward, &c. i. e. after the times before spoken of*; so that they were different times which were meant in *Joel* 2. 15. and *Joel* 2. 28.

[In a certain case.] I have thus expressed it, guarded and limited, tho' our author hath mentioned the case without restriction, but I suppose he meant it of the particular case, to which I have referred in the margin, which was of a brother refusing to raise up seed unto his brother.

- A. D. 248. the earth, and said unto him, *What doth my Lord command his servant to do? And the captain of the Lord's Host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.* Thus in the book of Exodus, Moses is likewise bid to put off his shoes, as not being the bridegroom; And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, What is the matter? And the Lord said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.
- John 1. 26, 27. Agreeable hereunto is what we read in the gospel; John answered them, saying, I indeed baptize with water, but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; he it is of whom I said, That coming after me, he should be preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose. Thus
- Luke 12. 35, 36, 37. in St. Luke; Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye your selves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom their Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. And again in the book of Revelations; The Lord God omnipotent reigneth: Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.
- Isaiah 53. 20. Thus in ^a Isaiah; I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in ways not good, after their own sins. Again in Jeremiah; Come, and let us put ^a poisonous wood into his food, and let us cut him off from the land of the living. And in the book of Deuteronomy; ^b Thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. And again in the ^c xxith psalm; ^d They pierced my hands and my feet; they have as it were counted all my bones. They stood staring and looking upon me. They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. But be not thou far from me, O Lord; haste thee to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth, and deliver my life from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. And in the cxviiith (alias cxixth) psalm; Let the fear of thee ^e pierce my flesh thro', as it were with nails. And in the cxlith (alias cxliith) psalm; Let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Concerning which the prophet Zephaniah hath thus expressed himself; Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is at hand; for the Lord hath prepared his sacrifice, he hath sanctified his chosen guests. And in Zechariah; They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced. And again in the lxxxviith (alias lxxxviiith) psalm; I have called all the day long upon

^a [Isaiah.] Tertullian against the Jews, ch. 13. and Justin Martyr in Apol. 2. and in Dial. against Trypho, have applied this passage as our author hath done. Bishop Fell.

^b [Poisonous wood.] See this passage cited in §. 15. of this book.

^c [Thy life.] This passage is applied by Tertullian to the same purpose in his book against the Jews, chap. 11.

^d [They pierced.] The Jews have so often acknowledged the relation of this psalm to Christ, that they cannot go back from it; and are therefore forced upon an hypothesis, which hath no manner of support from scripture, or their own writers before the time of Christ; they imagine that there were two Messias's foretold, one Ben-Joseph, who was to be a man of sorrows, and in a low station; the other Ben-David, who was to be a victorious warrior. Bishop Fell.

^e [Pierce my flesh, &c.] So the LXX; and the Hebrew will signify that, as well as *trample*, which is our English version; but then the former more literally brings the application home to our Saviour's case.

thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee. And in the book of *Numb.* A. D. 248. *bers; God is not a man that he should be suspended; nor the son of a man,* Numb. 23. 19. *that he should be threatened out of any of his purposes.* Thus likewise we find our blessed Lord speaking in the gospel; *As Moses lifted up the serpent* John 3. 14; *in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever* 15. *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

21. Thus in the prophet *Habakkuk; His glory covered the heavens, and* §. 21. *the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he* That in the sufferings and sign of the cross, there was to be great virtue. *had horns coming out of his hands; and the power of his glory was esta-* Hab. 3. 3, 4. *blished, and his love was firm and settled. Before him shall go his word,* 5. *and shall go forth into the fields and desert, according to his mighty pow-* Isai. 9. 6. *er. Thus in Isaiah; Behold, to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and* 5. *the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called,* 5. *Wonderful, Counsellour. With this sign of the cross, Amalek was overcome by* *Joshua, under the command of Moses: It is written in the book of Exodus,* Exod. 17. 9, 11, 12, 13, 14. *that Moses said unto Joshua, Chuse you out men, and go out, fight with* *Amalek to morrow. And behold I will stand on the top of the hill with the* *rod of God in mine hand. And it came to pass when Moses held up his hands* *that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hands Amalek prevailed.* *But Moses's hands were heavy; and they took a stone and put it under him,* *and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the* *one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until* *the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and all his people.* *And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and* *rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will surely put out the remembrance* *of Amalek from under heaven.*

22. Thus in the prophet *Ezekiel God is represented saying; Go thro' the* §. 22. *midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh* That salvation was to be obtained thro' the sign of the cross, by such as were marked with it on their foreheads. *and who cry, for all the abominations which be done in the midst thereof.* *He proceeds; Go ye, and smite, let not your eyes spare, neither have ye pity.* *Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but* *come not near any one upon whom is the mark, and begin at my sanctuary*

^a *Suspended.*] So the LXX, and our author; the application or allusion of which to the crucifixion of *Ezek. 9. 4, 5,* Christ is easier than it would be in any other form of expression: But the first and most obvious meaning plainly speaks the absolute perfection of God, and was designed to represent him, as fixed and immovable; both the *Hebrew*, and the other versions (except the LXX) read it as we do, *God is not a man that he should lie.*

^b *Habakkuk.*] This passage is applied by *Tertullian* to our blessed Lord's transfiguration. See his book against *Marcion*, b. 4. ch. 22. *Bishop Fell.*

^c *His Glory.*] Our author here followeth the LXX; whose diversity from our *English* version is occasioned both here and elsewhere by the equivocal signification of many *Hebrew* words, which may, with equal propriety, be expressed in various renderings. The horns ascribed to him, are intended to represent the glorious manner of his appearance; the rays of his splendor.

^d *Go forth into the fields and desert.*] Our version for the reason just given exhibits this to us in quite another form: Our author's words are, *procedis in campos secundum grassus suos.* The word in the original which we have translated *burning coal* (*pruna ardens*) signifies likewise (as *bishop Fell* hath observed) a *parched land* (*terra torrida*;) And I doubt not but our author in chusing that construction might have some regard to our Saviour's going forth into the field appointed for his crucifixion. N. B. The original purpose of the prophet seems to have been describing God's past deliverance of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, and giving them a law; which is accommodated by our author to the case of Christ.

^e *According to his mighty power.*] *Secundum grassus suos.* The LXX continue this to the succeeding verse, without any point between them; and read it, *κατὰ μέγαν αὐτοῦ τὸν, καὶ ἐκάλυψεν αὐτὸν.* Our author stopping at *grassus suos* is somewhat obscure. According to his steps or paces is the literal construction of his words. But how the steps of God, or of his Son in going forth should differ from other steps, except in the power and wonderful efficacy of them, I do not conceive; so I have given them that turn. The power of his cross we are to remember is here the subject of the section.

^f *Government shall be upon his shoulders.*] *Tertullian* (against the *Jews*, ch. 10.) observes, that the ensigns of regal power are usually worn upon the head; but our Saviour bore his regalia, which led to his regal office, upon his shoulders; i. e. indeed he carried his cross upon them. *Bishop Fell.*

^g *Exodus.*] The passage cited from this chapter, is applied in the same manner, as our author hath applied it, by *Tertullian*, in his book against the *Jews*, ch. 10. and against *Marcion*, b. 3. ch. 18. where *Amalek* is represented as a type of *satan*; *Joshua* (or *Jesus*) of Christ; and *Moses's* hands lift up, are made allusive to the sign of the cross. So likewise *Justin Martyr* in *Dial. with Trypho.* *Bishop Fell.*

^h *Set a mark upon the foreheads.*] So *Tertullian* against the *Jews*, ch. 11. and against *Marcion*, b. 3. *Bishop Fell.*

Thus

A. D. 248.
Exod. 12. 13.

Revelat. 14.

Revelat. 22.
13. 14.

§. 23.
That there
was to be a
darkness at
mid-day when
Christ should
suffer.

Amos 8. 9. 10.
Jerem. 15. 9.

§. 24.
That he was
not to consi-
der under the
power of
death; nor to
be detained in
hell.

Psal. 30. 3.
Psal. 16. 10.
Psal. 3. 5.
John 10. 18.

§. 25.
That he was
to rise again
the third day
from the
dead.

Hosea 6. 2.
Exod. 19. 10.
11.
Matt. 12. 39.
40.

§. 26.
That upon his
resurrection
Christ was to
receive all
power from
his Father.

Daniel 7. 13.
14.
Isai. 33. 10.
11.

Thus in *Exodus*; The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. Yet farther in the book of *Revelations*; And I looked, and lo a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. Once more in the same book; I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.

23. Thus in the prophet *Amos*; And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation. Thus again in *Jeremiah*; She that hath born, languisheth, she is become weary of her life, her sun is gone down, whilst it was yet day; she hath been ashamed and confounded; and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies. With which agrees exactly the event recited by the holy evangelist, who tells us, That from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

24. Thus in the xxixth (alias xxxth) psalm; O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave. And again in the xvth (alias xvith) psalm; Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Yet again in the iii^d psalm; I laid me down and slept, I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. With all which the gospel well agrees, where it introduces our Saviour saying; No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father.

25. Thus in *Hosea*; After two days will he revive us, and in the third day shall we rise again. And in *Exodus*; The Lord said unto Moses, Go unto thy people, and testify unto them, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their cloaths, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down upon the mount Sinai. And thus we read in the gospel; An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

26. Thus in the prophet *Daniel*; I saw in the night visions; and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the antient of days, and they who there ministered brought him before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Thus in *Isaiab*; Now will I rise, saith the Lord, now will I be exalted, now will I lift up my self. Now ye shall see and understand, and be confounded; your strength shall be vain, and fire shall consume you.

[Tree of life.] As by one tree man was lost, in the transgression of the first Adam; so he was restored by the sufferings of the second Adam on a tree; thus Noah, as a type of Christ, was saved by an ark of wood, as Justin Martyr hath observed in Dial. with Trypho. Bishop Fell.

[Amos.] Irenaeus, b. 4. ch. 66. interprets this and the following prophecy after our author's manner; Tertullian against Marcion, b. 4. ch. 42. applies likewise this of Amos as our author doth. Bp. Fell.

[Hosea.] This passage is applied to our author's purpose by Tertullian in his book against the Jews, ch. 14. and against Marcion, b. 4. ch. 43. Bp. Fell.

[Wash their cloaths.] The passage in Revelations 7. 14. seems to have referred to this. Bp. Fell.

[They who there ministered.] Qui assistebant ei obsecrantes eum; so our author. It appears from Justin Martyr, Dial. with Trypho, that the reading antiently was, ei ministrantes; which is the present reading of the LXX. Tertullian in his book against Marcion, b. 3. ch. 9. reads it, qui assistebant adduxerunt illum. So that instead of assistebant, the copy-writers seem, by mistake, to have written obsecrantes; whence our author hath obsecrantes. (Bp. Fell.) The Hebrew hath it, They caused him to draw nigh unto him; i. e. They caused the Son of Man to draw nigh unto the antient of days.

Thus

Thus in the sixth (*aliàs exth*) psalm; *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool; the Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.* Thus again in the book of Revelations; *And I turned to see the voice which spake with me; and being turned, I saw the seven golden candlesticks. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed, with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wooll, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead; and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.* And thus it is written to the same purpose in the gospel, how Jesus, after his resurrection, came and spake to his disciples, saying, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*

27. Thus our Saviour saith of himself in the gospel; *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* And again in the same evangelist; *I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.* Thus in St. Matthew; *Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* And again in the evangelist first cited; *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Thus St. Paul to the Ephesians, speaking of Christ, saith, *That when he came, he preached peace to them who were afar off, and to them who were nigh: For thro' him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.* And to the Romans; *For all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God; but are justified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.* And thus we read in the epistle of St. Peter; *Christ also hath once suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* And again; *For this cause was the gospel preached to them, who are dead, that they may be raised up.* Thus we likewise read in the epistle of St. John; *Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Son and the Father too.*

28. Thus in the prophet Malachi; *Behold the day of the Lord cometh, which shall burn as an oven; and all the proud and all who know not the Lord shall be stubble, and the day which cometh shall burn them up saith the Lord of Hosts.* And in the xlixth (*aliàs lth*) psalm; *The mighty Lord, even the God of Gods hath spoken, and hath called the earth, from the rising up of the sun to the going down thereof; out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined: our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him: he shall call*

[That they may be raised up.] *ἵνα ἡγιασθῶσι ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ αὐτῶν ἐκτελεσθῇ.* So that they were punished in the judgment of men as to their flesh, which was dead; thus we now read it. Our author hath it, *Ut succensur*; which seems to give another meaning of the words, and to make the actual knowledge and preception of the gospel necessary to such as died before it, in order to their happy resurrection. And in this sense the citation is highly pertinent to the purpose it was brought for; viz. to prove, that there was no possible access for any to the Father, but thro' the Son.

[Malachi.] This prophesy our blessed Lord hath asserted to himself in *Matt. 11. 14.* for the coming of Elias there referred to; as likewise the 5th verse of this chapter, does plainly belong to that day of the Lord, which is here also mentioned. Bishop Fell.

- A. D. 248. to the heavens from above, and to the earth that he may judge his people: gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice; and the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself. Thus in *Isaiah*; The Lord God of Hosts shall go forth in his might, and * bring his enemies to a speedy destruction; he shall stir up controversy, he shall triumph over his enemies with a mighty shout, I have long indeed held my peace, but shall I therefore refrain my self for ever? Thus again in the *lxviith* (alias *lxviiith*) psalm, Let God arise, let his enemies be scatter'd; let them also who hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so let them be; as wax melteth at the fire, so let the ungodly perish at the presence of God; but let the righteous be glad, let them rejoyce before God; yea let them exceedingly rejoyce: sing unto God, sing praises unto his name, make way for him who rideth up towards the west, God is his name; the people shall be confounded at his presence, he is a father of the fatherless, and a judge for the widows, even God in his holy habitation; he maketh men to be of one mind in an house, he mightily delivereth the captives, and those who lie half dead in the bitterness of their souls. O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march * thro' the wilderness. Thus in the *lxxxiith* (alias *lxxxiii^d*) psalm; Arise, O God, judge the earth, for thou shalt dispossess all the nations, and shalt claim them to thy self. Thus in the gospel of S. Matthew; What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of David? Art thou come to torment us * before the time? And so in S. John; The father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son, that all men should honour the son as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the son honoureth not the father which hath sent him. Once more; thus hath St. Paul written in his ii^d epistle to the Corinthians; We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his Body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad.
- S. 29. 29. Thus in the prophet *Zechariah*; Say ye to the Daughter of Zion, be-
 That he is to hold thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having salvation, lowly and
 be a King for riding upon an ass unbroken. And in *Isaiah* * Who shall reveal to you the
 ever and ever. place of torments? He that walketh uprightly, that despiseth corrupt gain,
 Zech. 9. 9. that stoppeth his ears from hearing of Blood, and shutteth his eyes from see-
 cited and ap- ing injustice; he shall dwell on high, his defence shall be the munition of rocks,
 plied Mat. 21. bread shall be given unto him, his waters shall be pure. Your eyes shall see the
 5. King in his beauty. Thus again in *Malachi*; I am a great King (saith the
Isai. 33. 14, Lord of Hosts) and my name is glorious among the gentiles. And in the ii^d
 15, 16, 17. psalm; I am appointed by him to be a king upon his holy hill of Zion, and I
 Mal. 1. 14. will declare his decree. And again in the *xxith* (alias *xxii^d*) psalm; All the
 Psal. 2. 6, 7. 28.

* That he may judge.] The LXX read *ἀναστήσεται* and our Author *us separat*, that he may separate; the difference is not great, since the process of the great judgment will be by a separation of the good from the bad. See *Mat.* 25. 32. Bishop Fell.

* Bring his enemies to a speedy destruction.] *Comminuet bellum*, saith our Author from the LXX, who read it *ὡς ἡνίοχος* which, I suppose, means, that he would carry the war on so vigorously, as to bring it speedily to an issue, with great zeal and fury, as the Hebrew and other Versions intimate.

* Thro' the wilderness.] This seems to determine the Original intent of the psalm, to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt; and so its looking forwards to any future event must be only understood in the way of Analogy.

* Before the time.] There was therefore a time, wherein they seem'd to confess, that he might torment them.

* Who shall reveal to you, &c.] The Jews at the time of this prophecy were under a state of punishment from the Assyrians; the prophet takes his rise from thence, and puts the question according to our version, how, if they could not bear that lighter punishment, they would be able to endure that future vengeance, which their sins had merited; but then the succeeding verse must by no means be understood as an answer to this, but as turning the table, and representing the felicities of quite another sort of men, viz. the righteous. The LXX and our author read this passage otherwise, and put the question, who should reveal to them the place and state of punishment reserv'd for the ungodly? And so accommodate the whole passage to Christ: But the Hebrew asks, Who shall inhabit a devouring fire? And the Chaldee Paraphrase asks, Who shall dwell in Sion? And so makes it refer to the righteous, who were the only persons entituled to dwell there. N.B. The Arabick Version reads, who shall reveal or shew, as the LXX and our author do.

ends

ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds A. D. 248.
of the Gentiles shall worship before thee; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and
he is the governour among the nations. Yet again in the xxiii^d (alias xxivth) psal. 24. 7.
psalm; Open your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors,
and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord
strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battel. Open your gates, ye
princes, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall
come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of
Glory. Thus likewise we read in the xlvth (alias xlvth) psalm; ^a My heart psal. 45. 1, 2;
hath brought forth a good word, I speak of the things which I have made 3, 4.
unto the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer, thou art fairer than
the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips, therefore God hath blessed
thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, according to
thy worship and renown. And in thy majesty reign prosperously, because of
truth, of meekness and righteousness. Again in the vth psalm; Hearken un- psal. 5. 2, 3.
to the voice of my cry, my King, and my God, for unto thee will I pray:
My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I
direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. Again in the xcvith (alias xcvith) psal. 97. 1.
psalm; The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the
Isles be glad thereof. And in the xlvth (alias xlvth) psalm just before cited; psal. 45. 9;
Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about 10, 11.
with divers colours. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine
ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house: Because the King
hath greatly desired thy beauty; for he is thy Lord God. Once more in the
lxxiii^d (alias lxxivth) psalm; God is our King of old; and hath worked sal- psal. 74. 12.
vation in the midst of the earth. Agreeable to all this is what we read in the
gospel of St. Matthew; Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa Mat. 2. 1, 2;
in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east to
Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we have
seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. And this is farther ex-
plain'd to us in the Gospel of St. John; Jesus answered, my kingdom is not John 18. 36,
of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants 37.
fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not
from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a King then? Jesus
answered, thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this
cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth; eve-
ry one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

30. Thus in the lxxi^d (alias lxxii^d) psalm; Give the King thy judgments, §. 30.
O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son; that he may judge thy That he is a
people with righteousness. See also the Book of the Revelations, where King and
it is written, I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat judge.
upon him was called faithful and true; and in righteousness he doth judge psal. 71. 1, 2.
and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many Revelat. 19.
crowns; and he had a name written which no man knew but he himself. 11, 12, 13,
And he was clothed with a vesture ^b dipt in blood, and his name was called 14, 15, 16.
the word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon
white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. And out of his mouth
goeth a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and
he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the
fierceness and wrath of Almighty God; and he hath on his vesture and on his
thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Finally, if you
consult the Gospel of St. Matthew, you will read his office there more particu- Mat. 25. from
larly the 31 to the
end.

^a My heart hath brought forth, &c.] See what is observed upon this in §. 3. of this book.

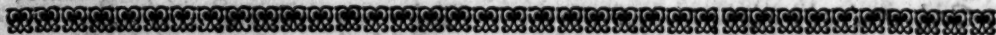
^b Dipt.] Our author reads, *aspersum vestem*, sprinkled; in the Greek *ἡ ἑστὶν περικλυμένη*, so that dipt and sprinkled were words not widely different from each other in our author's apprehensions. And as to the case of sprinkling in baptism instead of dipping, we shall meet with his opinion in his epistles, No 69. and in dissent. upon the council of Carthage.

A. D. 249. larly described; *When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world: For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; sick and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying; Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand; Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord; when saw we thee an hungred, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.*



TESTIMONIES *against* the JEWS.

BOOK. III.



The third book of Testimonies is a work entirely distinct from the two former; which in the Lambeth MS. are joined together, so as to make but one treatise; and so this would then be the second book. And indeed that way of ranging the books of Testimonies seems the most accurate and proper; tho' the other way hath prevailed in common use. It hath been doubted by some, whether this work were genuine; and accordingly some editions have come forth without it. The suspicions against it are founded upon the interpolations of some copyers; and upon some quotations wherein the vulgar Latin is made use of, to which our author himself, we know, was a stranger. But these objections are easily answered by any one, who will consider, that the forwardness or the mistakes of copyers, may account for all such variations from the author's manner; and must indeed account for such like alterations in other books besides this, which yet pass for genuine without suspicion; particularly in our author's Exhortation to Martyrdom, where he often departs from the LXX, and follows the vulgar Latin: The credit of this is sufficiently sup-

ported by MSS. and by quotations out of it from Augustin and Jerom. The design of it is sufficiently illustrated in the body of the work; which speaks it a directory for christian practice, drawn out of the holy scriptures; and addressed to the same Quirinus, whom our author had armed against Judaism in the foregoing tracts. The right reverend Editor, whom I usually follow in the order and chronology of St. CYPRIAN's Works, hath assigned this to the year 249, before the persecution, which began under the Emperor Decius towards the end of this year, soon after the settlement of that Emperor in the imperial throne. In this year our author was advanced to the episcopal chair; and he had not long been so, before he wrote the ensuing tract; which I have chosen not to disjoin from the preceding ones, tho' the treatise concerning the Habit of Virgins comes in between them as to order of time, and was probably written in the year 248.

CYPRIAN to his dear son QUIRINUS, greeting.



OUR faith and piety, my dear son, have engaged you in a request to me, that I would make a collection for you of texts out of the holy scriptures, and range them under proper heads, whereby you might be instructed in the duties and doctrines of the christian religion; and you have the rather chosen to have all this laid before you in a short epitome, that your mind, which is entirely set upon God, may not lose itself in a multitude of voluminous writings, nor be distracted by a great variety of books; but that you may have wherewithal to refresh and assist your memory, by shorter and more general extracts made for you of gospel-precepts. Wherefore as I am always most ready to oblige you, and am attached to you by the bonds of an inviolable affection, I have here complied with your desire; and have taken these pains once for all, that you might henceforwards be always made easy. I have therefore, to the best of my small ability, collected together such texts of scripture, as I judg'd might be most serviceable to that purpose; such as might carry both ease and profit to the reader; and by being laid all together in a narrow compass, might be soon read over, and easily be repeated, as occasions should require. I take leave, my dear son, with wishing you all manner of prosperity.

A. D. 249.



THUS in the prophet *Isaiab*; Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sin. They seek me daily, and desire to know my ways, as a nation which did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God. Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold in the day of your fast ye find pleasure; ye either exact all your labours, or ye fast for strife and debate, or ye smite with the fist of wickedness; wherefore do ye fast in this manner, only to make your voice to be heard on high? I like and will accept of no such fasts, except the soul of the man be truly humbled; no, not tho' he bow down his neck like a bulrush, and spread sackcloth and ashes under him, neither so shall it be called an acceptable fast. Even such an one is not the fast which I have chosen: But loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, and leave off all oppressive and rigorous dealings: Give rest to such as are harrassed and wearied, and cancel all unequitable obligations. Distribute thy bread to the hungry; bring the poor, who are cast out, into thine house. When thou seest

S. 1.

The advantages of charity and mercy.

Isai. 58. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

- A. D. 249. *seest the naked, cloath him, and despise not thine own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy garments shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall surround thee. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.* To the same purpose we read in holy Job: *I have delivered the poor out of the hand of the powerful; and have stepped in to the relief of the fatherless, when he had none to help him. The mouth of the widow blessed me; when I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and a father to the weak and helpless. And again in the book of Tobit: And I said to Tobias my son, go and bring what poor man soever thou shalt find out of thy brethren, who is mindful of the Lord with all his heart, bring him hither, and he shall partake with me of this dinner; and so I tarry for thee till thou come.* Again in the same book; *My son, be mindful of the Lord our God all thy days, and do not transgress his commandments. Do uprightly all thy life long, and follow not the way of unrighteousness; for if thou deal truly, thy works shall prosperously succeed unto thee. Give alms of thy substance, neither turn thy face from any poor man, and the face of God shall not be turned away from thee: If thou hast abundance, give alms accordingly; if thou hast but a little, be not afraid to give according to that little: for so thou layest up a good reward for thyself against the day of necessity. Because that alms do deliver from death, and suffer not to come into darkness; for alms are a good gift unto all who give them, in the sight of the most High.* To the same purpose we find the wise man expressing his mind in the book of Proverbs; *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth out at interest to the Lord. And again, He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack, but he that turneth away his eyes, shall be in great want. Yet again, By mercy and truth iniquity is purged. And farther, If thine enemy be hungry, feed him, if he be thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.* Thus in the book of Ecclesiasticus we read; *As water quenbeth fire, so doth alms make an atonement for sins.* And the same author in his book of Proverbs hath given the following caution; *Say not unto thy neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee, for thou knowest not what the morrow may bring forth.* And again in the same book he hath thus expressed himself; *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself unto God, and there shall be none to hear him.* And again, *Whoso walketh unreprieved in righteousness, leaveth his children blessed after him.* To this purpose the same^d author writes in Ecclesiasticus; *My son, according to thine ability do good to thyself, and give the Lord his due offering. Remember that death will not be long in coming.* And again, *Eccles. 29. 12. Lodge thine alms in the heart of the poor, and thy shall pray effectually for thy deliverance from all evil. And that mercy is profitable to the posterity*

^a *Thy garments.* The LXX read it *ἰαματὰ σου* for which, in all likelihood, thro' the mistake of copyers in the African church, our author, as Tertullian did before him, and Augustin after him, read it *ἰαματὰ σου* and so with one change of a letter made an entire change of the sense; for *Sanitatus*, and *Vestimenta* (healings and garments) differ widely. Bp. Fell. The Hebrew reads it, *thy medicine, thy cure*, as the Chaldee paraphrast hath it, *the cure of thy wound.*

^b *Lendeth out at interest.* So the LXX and our author *donat* and *generat*. Our vulgar Latin, and English more simply, *maunat*, *lendeth*, as the Hebrew had read it before them.

^c *Alms make an atonement.* Amongst the seven ways mentioned by Origen wherein sin was remitted, this cure of them by alms was the 3^d; baptism was the 1st, martyrdom the 2^d, the 3^d alms, the 4th that forgiveness which one extended to another in the case of trespasses; the 5th the conversion of any sinner from the error of his ways, the 6th much love (such as was that of the woman who was a sinner, re-pentant Luke 7. 37.) the 7th was by penitential rigours. Origen. *Homil. in Levitic. c. 3. Hom. No. 2.*

^d *The same author.* Observe how undisputed the opinion was in St. Cyprian's age, which ascrib'd the book of Ecclesiasticus to Solomon; yet it might be only because it was written after Solomon's manner, or perhaps it might be really ascrib'd to Solomon as author, and to the son of Sirach only as collector; tho' it could not but be known that the last chapters were written after the age of Solomon.

^e *In the heart.* We read it now *shut up thine alms in thy store-houses, &c. ἰαματὰ σου* but it should seem from our author's version, that his copies read it *καρδίᾳ σου*. (Bp. Fell.)

of those who shew it. the psalmist hath born testimony in the xxxviith (alias A. D. 249. xxxviiith) psalm, I have been young (saith he) and now am old, yet have I²⁶ not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread; he is ever merciful, and lendeth, and his seed is blessed. Thus again in the xlith (alias psal. 41. 1. xlith) psalm; Blessed is the man who considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble. And yet again in the cxith (alias cxiith) psalm; He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness shall remain for ever. To the same purpose we read in the prophet Hosea; I desire mercy rather than sacrifice, and the knowledge of the Lord more than burnt-offerings. And in the gospel according to St. Matthew; Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. And, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. And again, Lay up for your selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break thro' and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Thus again, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. And that even a small instance of charity was acceptable in the sight of God, observe what is written in the same gospel of our Saviour, laying, Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward. And that alms must in no case whatever be denied, take notice how unlimited the precept is; Give to every man that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away. Again, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus saith unto him, Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up, What lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me. Once more out of the same gospel; When the son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; And he shall set the sheep on his right-hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right-hand, Come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungred and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord when saw we thee an hungred and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, which my father hath prepared for the devil and his angels; For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and

[Which my father hath prepared.] Our author always reads it so, as he doth likewise everlasting burning instead of everlasting punishment, at the last verse of this chapter. (See 9. 17. of the tract of alms and good works, where he doth the same.)

- A. D. 249. did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me; And these shall go away into everlasting burning, but the righteous into life eternal. Upon the same subject we read in St. Luke; Sell what ye have, and give alms. And again in the same gospel; He who made that which is within, made also that which is without: But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and behold all things are clean unto you. Once more; Behold, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold. And Jesus said unto him; This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham. To this same purpose we read in St. Paul's ii^d epistle to the Corinthians; Let your abundance be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality. As it is written; He that had gathered much, had nothing over; and he that had gathered little, had no lack. And again in the same epistle; He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver. As it is written; He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that minisrath seed to the sower, both minister bread for their food, and multiply their seed sown, and increase the fruits of their righteousness; that in every thing ye may be enriched: For the administration of this service, not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. Thus we likewise read in St. John's epistle; Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And in St. Luke to the same purpose; When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.
5. 2. Thus we read in St. Paul's ii^d epistle to the Corinthians; For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened.
5. 3. Thus we read in the prophet Malachi; Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother? And to the same purpose in St. John's gospel; Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. And again; This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you; greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Thus in St. Matthew's gospel; Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. And again in the same gospel; Verily I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Upon this very subject we find the apostle thus expressing himself in his former epistle to the Corinthians; And I, brethren, could not
- 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3.

[As it is written.] What St. Paul hath here cited and applied from Exodus 16. 18. (which related to the Israelites gathering their manna in a quantity, precisely sufficient for their own use) with a little apology for our author, where he seems sometimes to make improper quotations, and to apply them in a manner, which their original intent was not made to bear. If you grant to our author, what must be allowed to St. Paul, viz. to speak ad hominem, and to apply the scriptures as they were usually then applied, both will thus be free from censure upon much the same foundations. See note (being from a copy in 5. 2. of epistle 61. The Jews first introduced this way, and the apostles argued with them (especially St. Paul) upon their own topicks, and thence the first writers of our religion easily fell into it.

Speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat; for ^a whilst ye were yet in your infancy, ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able: For ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is among you, envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? Again in the same epistle; Tho' I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing. And tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and tho' I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity ¹ is generous, brave spirited, and kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; kindly covereth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. Thus the same apostle in his epistle to the Galatians; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self: But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another. And St. John to the same purpose ² in his epistle; In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God; neither he that loveth not his brother: Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. And again; If any man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Upon this subject we read in the Acts of the Apostles the practice of the first Christians; And the multitude of them who believed were of one heart and of one soul, [neither was there any difference between them] neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And in the gospel of St. Matthew thus; If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembreth that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift ³ at the altar. And again in the forenamed epistle to St. John; God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. And again; He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is a liar, and walketh in darkness, even until now.

4. Thus we read in the gospel written by St. John; A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. And to the same purpose in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; What hast thou, which thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Thus likewise in the 1st book of Samuel; Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge. And again; The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength. And to the same purpose

^a Whilst ye were yet in your infancy.] This may well be supposed the addition of some copier, who pretended to explain what was otherwise clear enough. In our author's treatise of Envy and Emulation, where he quotes this text, we have it without this addition. Bishop Fell.

¹ Is generous, &c.] See what is observed in note on §. 12. of the book concerning the Unity of the Church; and so likewise for kindly covereth, which reading differs a little from our present.

² In his epistle.] Had it not been for a passage cited out of St. John's 2^d epistle in the 81st suffrage of the council of Carthage, I should much have doubted, whether it had been known to our African bishops; because where our author quotes any epistle of St. Paul's to persons or people, (unto whom he had wrote more than one) he usually gives its numerical distinction: But when he quotes St. John's or St. Peter's, he only saith, St. John or St. Peter, in his epistle.

³ Neither was there any difference between them.] So some antient MSS. read this passage, tho' our present copies read it without these words. 'Tis plain however that our author's copies had them; for he is constant to this lection, and we have it particularly from him again in §. 19. of his tract of Illness and good Works.

⁴ At the altar.] These words seem redundant, tho' being expressed in our author, I have given them to the reader in my translation of him.

⁵ §. 4.] Augustin in his controversy with the Pelagian hereticks, makes great use of this §. Bp. Fell.

A. D. 249. we read in the books of the ° Maccabees; It is meet to be subject unto God;
 2 Mac. 9. 12. and that a man, who is mortal, should not proudly think of himself, as if
 1 Mac. 2. 62, he were God. And again; Fear not the words of a sinful man, for his glory
 63. shall be dung and worms. To day he shall be lifted up, and to morrow he
 shall not be found, because he is returned into his dust, and his thought is
 come to nothing.

5. 5. To this purpose we read in Isaiah's prophecy; Thus saith the Lord, the
 Humility and a peaceable spirit to be maintained. *Isai. 66. 1, 2.*
 heaven is my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool; where is the house which
 ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? For all those things
 hath mine hand made, and all those things are mine, saith the Lord. And
 to whom shall I look, but to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and
 that trembleth at my words? And thus in the gospel written by St. Matthew;
 Matt. 5. 5. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Again in St. Luke;
 Luk. 9. 48. He that is least among you, the same shall be great. And again in the same
 Luk. 14. 11. evangelist; Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth
 Rom. 11. 20, himself shall be exalted. Thus in the epistle to the Romans; Be not high-
 21. minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest
 he also spare not thee. And to the same purpose we read in the xxxiii^d (alias
 xxxivth) psalm; He shall save such as be of a contrite spirit. And again in
 Psal. 34. 18. the epistle to the Romans; Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute
 Rom. 13. 7, 8. is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour;
 owe no man any thing, but to love one another. Thus in the gospel according
 to St. Matthew, we read the character of pharisaical pride; They love the
 Matt. 23. 6, 7, uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues; And greetings
 8. in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi; but be not ye called
 Rabbi; for ye have one master. And in the gospel according to St. John, we
 John 13. 16, read somewhat of the same nature; The servant is not greater than his ma-
 17. ster; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these
 things, happy are ye if ye do them. And finally the lxxxii^d (alias lxxxii^d)
 psalm, exhorts, That justice be done to the afflicted and needy.

5. 6. Thus we read in Solomon; The furnace proveth the potter's vessel, so
 That good men should bear their troubles patiently, because they are trials. *Eccles. 27. 5.*
 doth the trial of affliction prove the righteous. And again in the book of
 Psalms; The sacrifices of God are a troubled spirit; a broken and a contrite
 heart God will not despise. And again; The Lord is nigh unto them who are
 of a broken heart, and will save such as be of a contrite and humble spirit.
 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord will deliver them out
 of all. Thus also we read in the book of Job; Naked came I out of my mo-
 ther's womb, and naked shall I go under the earth; the Lord gave and the
 Psal. 51. 17. Lord hath taken away, as the Lord pleased so it came to pass, blessed be the
 Psal. 34. 18, name of the Lord. In all which beset him Job sinned not with his lips be-
 Job 1. 21, 22. fore the Lord. Thus in St. Matthew's gospel; Blessed are they that mourn,
 Matt. 5. 4. for they shall be comforted. And in St. John's; These things have I spoken
 John 16. 33. unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribu-
 lation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Thus again in

° Maccabees.] See what was observed upon the book of Tobit in §. 20. of the first book of these Testi-
 monies. Pamellius takes occasion hence of quoting a passage from Augustin; wherein he says, That the
 church accepts for canonical the books of the Maccabees, tho' the Jews had not received them into their
 canon, in regard to the noble example therein exhibited of martyrs and confessors. De Civitat. Dei, cap. 36.
 i. s. Indeed they were read at that time in the christian church, not for any peculiar credit due to the
 authority of the writer, but for the sake of diverse actions recorded by him, which were worthy of
 imitation. This Jerome, in his preface to the Proverbs, hath more clearly expressed, where he saith, That
 they were read for the profit and edification of the people; but that no doctrine of religion is thence to be af-
 firmed or proved. Bishop Fell.

The trial of affliction prove the righteous.] The LXX and we read it, so the trial of man is in his rea-
 soning.

Under the earth.] This seems added by way of explanation, the LXX express it more briefly, re-
 turn thither, and so do we. The womb which he came from was earth, and it was the same to which
 he should return. (Bp. Fell.) The Hebrew agrees with the LXX, and the Chaldean Paraphrast reads it, to
 the house of my burial.

St. Paul's 2^d epistle to the Corinthians; There was given to me a thorn in my flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me; and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Thus likewise in the same apostle to the Romans; We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience probation, and approbation hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Thus in St. Matthew's gospel; How wide is the gate, and how broad is the way which leadeth to destruction! and many are they who go in thereat! How strait is the gate, and how narrow is the way which leadeth unto life! and few there be who find it! To this purpose we read in Tobit what his wife reproach'd him with; Where are thine alms and thy righteous deeds? Behold what thou sufferest? And again in the 'Wisdom of Solomon; In the places of the wicked the righteous grieve; but when they perish the righteous increase.

7. Thus St. Paul to the Ephesians; Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption: Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you.

8. Thus Solomon in his Proverbs; He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that restraineth a wrathful spirit, than he that taketh a city. And again; A fool's wrath is presently known, but a wise man covereth his own shame. To which purpose St. Paul afterwards advised in his epistle to the Ephesians; Be angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath. And thus we read in St. Matthew's gospel; Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.

9. Thus St. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians adviseth all to consider themselves lest they also be tempted; to bear one another's burdens, and so to fulfil the Law of Christ.

10. Thus we read in the prophet Jeremiah; Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord. To the same purpose we may read the holy psalmist expressing himself in his lvith (alias lvith) psalm; In God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Again; My soul truly waiteth upon none but God. Yet again in the cxviith (alias cxviiith) psalm; The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me. And a little farther in the same psalm; It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes. And this very thing we find exemplified in a story related to us by the prophet Daniel; Shadrach, Meshac, and Abednego answered and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, O King, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; for the God whom we serve is able to deliver us from

[Approbation.] In our author probationem, which is a literal translation of the Greek *deusipho*; we render it experience, viz. a proof upon trial. The meaning of all is the same, viz. approbation of our virtue upon trial made of it.

[How wide.] So diverse MSS. read it with a note of admiration, and with these we find our author's copy agreeing.

[Wisdom of Solomon.] So our author sometimes calls the book of Proverbs, which hath the passage here alluded to by him; wherein he followeth the LXX, and so our English version differs a little from him. The Hebrew saith, That the wicked and the righteous are abominations to each other.

[Unto the day.] Our author followeth here some copies of the Greek, which instead of *eis diem*, (our present reading) read *usque ad diem*; and accordingly his rendering is *in his redemption*; but in my translation I have followed our English version, as the clearer.

- A. D. 249. *the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand. O King; And if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.* Thus again in the prophet Jeremiah we read the blessing or the curse of God annexed respectively to the neglect or practice of this duty; *Cursed be the man who trusteth in man; And, Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* Thus in Deuteronomy; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Thus in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans we have the punishment of such recorded, as transgressed in this particular; *They worshipped and served the creature, forsaking the creator: For which cause God gave them up unto vile affections.* Once more we read in St. John's epistle; *Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*
- Jerem. 17. 5, and 7.
Deut. 6. 13.
Rom. 1. 25, 26.
1 John 4. 4.
§. 11.
That the faithful, who have put off the old man, should breathe nothing but heavenly things; and think no more of this world, which they have renounced.
- II. Thus we read in the prophet Isaiah; *Seek ye the Lord, and when ye have found him, call upon him; when he hath drawn near unto you, then let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and will abundantly pardon his transgressions.* Thus in Solomon; *I have seen all the works which are done under the sun; and behold all is vanity.* Thus likewise the book of Exodus hath very fitly represented to us what should be the posture of those who are delivered from "captivity; *Thus shall ye eat it, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hands, and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover.* Thus we also ourselves are directed in St. Matthew's gospel; *Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things; but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* And to the same purpose we read in St. Luke; *No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.* Thus again in the fore-cited chapter of St. Matthew; *Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; Are ye not much better than they?* And again in St. Luke; *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye your selves, like unto men, who wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately: Blessed are those servants whom their Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching.* Thus we read our Saviour saying of himself in St. Matthew's gospel; *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.* And St. Luke hath declared to us the terms of our discipleship; *He that forsaketh not all which he hath, cannot be my disciple.* Agreeable to which is that representation of the apostle in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians; *Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a great price; therefore glorify God, and bear him in your bodies.*
- 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.
1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31.
- And again; *The time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives,*

[Delivered from captivity.] I have adventured here to paraphrase a little upon our author, that the reader might discern at first view the propriety of this citation, which depends upon the parallel between the deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, and the deliverance of christians from the yoke of sin. The loins of both should be girt, and they should hold themselves in readiness for a removal.

[And bear him.] So diverse copies read it; and our author is constant to this lection, — *Deus in corpore vestro.* (Bishop Fell.) So again in §. 63. Now to bear him, must either mean some allusion to the cross he bore, that we should bear him as he bore that and us; (see note on §. 4. of the Lord's prayer, *Bore us all*;) Or else must refer to the temple; and so as our bodies in the verse before had been called his temples, the precept must signify, our holding; or containing him; and this indeed would be most suitable to the context, if the word would endure it; viz. That we should so use our bodies, that they might be fit for holding and retaining Christ in them, as his temples; that therefore they should be preserved in their purity, holy and undefiled.

be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; A. D. 249.
 and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as
 though they bought not; and they that possess, as though they possessed not;
 and they that use this world, as though they used it not. For the fashion of
 this world passeth away. Thus again in the same epistle; The first man is 1 Cor. 15. 47.
 of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven; as is the earthy, such 48, 49.
 are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that
 are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthy, let us also
 bear the image of the heavenly. Thus also we read in the epistle to the Phi-
 lippians; All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. Philip. 2. 21.
 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in And Phil. 3.
 their shame, who mind earthly things: But our conversation is in heaven, 19, 20, 21.
 from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall
 change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.
 Thus in the same apostle to the Galatians; But God forbid that I should glo- Galat. 6. 14.
 ry, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is cruci-
 fied unto me, and I unto the world. And to Timothy; No man who is lifted 2 Tim. 2. 4, 5.
 as God's soldier, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may
 please him, who hath chosen and approved him. And if a man also strive
 for the mastery, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully. Thus al-
 so to the Colossians; Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments Coloss. 2. 20.
 of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye adhere to vain opi-
 nions? And again in the same epistle; If ye then be risen with Christ, seek Chap. 3. 1, 2.
 those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 3, 4.
 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are
 dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life
 shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Thus again in
 St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians; Put ye off concerning the former conver- Ephes. 4. 22,
 sation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and 23, 24.
 be renewed in the Spirit of your minds; and put on the new man, which af-
 ter God is created in righteousness, and holiness, and truth. To the same
 purpose we read in St. Peter's epistle; As strangers and pilgrims abstain from 1 Pet. 2. 11, 12.
 fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest
 among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they
 may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God. And in
 St. John's; He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also so to walk, 1 John 1. 6.
 even as he walked. And a little farther; Love not the world, neither the And ibid. vi.
 things which are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the 15, 16, 17.
 Father is not in him: For all which is in the world, is the lust of the flesh,
 the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and none of this is of the Father,
 but of the lust of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust
 thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever, even as God

[Let us also bear.] So our author; portemus, agreeably to those copies which read *portemus*. Instead
 of the vulgar *portemus*. Tertullian de Resurrect. Carn. cap. 49. reads this passage as our author doth;
 and only adds, by way of explication to the 47th verse, the second man (i. e. the word of God) is from
 heaven. But after all, the sense seems rather to justify our present reading in the future tense, than in
 the imperative; tho' Tertullian saith expressly, that at the 49th verse the apostle designed an exhortation.
 [Chosen him.] *Cui se probavit*, the meaning is the same with that of our English version, so I have
 made but little change in it; tho' the literal construction of our author's words would be, To whom he
 hath approved himself; viz. as a soldier; for our author both here and in his 1st epistle reads it, Lifted himself
 as God's soldier; *militans Deo*. So doth the vulgar Latin. The unlearned reader should here therefore be
 told, that there were several conditions requisite to approve a person who was allowed to stand upon
 the muster-roll; such as age, condition, stature, habit of body, and sometimes religion. *Ep. viii.*
 [Adhere to vain opinions.] *Adhaerere* in the original; *adhaerere* in our author; of which
 our version (are ye subject to ordinances) is rather an explication, than a literal construction.
 [Holiness and truth.] So some MSS. read instead of *true holiness*, which is our present reading. Our
 author followed the former; *ex sanctitate et veritate*. *Ep. viii.*
 [St. Peter's epistle.] See note on the 81st surfrage of the council of Carthage.
 [Even as God, &c.] Observe in this citation the little variations from, and additions to, our present
 reading.

A. D. 149. abideth for ever. Finally St. Paul in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians hath 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. advised us, to purge out the old leaven, that we be a new lump, as we are unleavened. For Christ our passover is sacrificed, therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

§. 12. 12. Thus we read in a book of Solomon's; A man that useth much swearing shall be filled with iniquity, and the plague shall never depart from his house; if he swear vainly, he shall not be innocent; and if he neglect to fulfil his oath, he shall be obnoxious to a double portion of punishment. And to the same purpose in St. Matthew's gospel; I say unto you, Swear not at all; but let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay. And again in the book of Exodus; Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

§. 13. 13. Thus we are forbidden in the book of Exodus, To revile or to curse the ruler of our people. And again the xxxiii^d (alias xxxivth) psalm, hath given us a lesson to much the same purpose; What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips, that they speak no guile. We read in Leviticus the punishment appointed for this prohibited practice; And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying; Being forth him that hath cursed without the camp, and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation of the children of Israel stone him. Thus also we read in St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians; Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, & to the edifying of your faith, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And in that to the Romans; Blessing, and cursing not. And our Lord hath denounced his menaces against the sin here mention'd, as we find them recorded in St. Matthew's gospel; Whosoever shall say to his Brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. And again in the same gospel; But I say unto you, That every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

§. 14. 14. Thus we read in the book of Job, his wife tempting him, and saying; Curse God and die; but he look'd upon her and said, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women: What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all which befall him did not Job sin with his lips before the Lord. And a little before in the same book; Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him upon the earth; a man who murmureth not, who is a true worshipper of God, and escheweth evil? To our present purpose we find the Psalmist thus declaring himself in the xxxiii^d (alias xxxivth) psalm; I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. And in the book of Numbers we have a strong intimation of the danger which attends a murmuring spirit; Let their murmuring (saith God) cease from before me, that they die not. And for the duty

§. 14. That we should never murmur at what befalls us, but bless God for every thing. Job 2. 9, 10. Job 1. 8. Psal. 34. 1. Numb. 17. 10.

[Is sacrificed.] Our common reading both in Greek and English adds *ut qui* for us; but diverse MSS. omit it, as doth our author. Bishop Fell.

[Swear vainly.] Our author (we find) hath made a distinction between vainly swearing, and swearing in vain; *vane juramentum*, and *frustra juramentum*. The LXX have something like it, *oath vainly*, which relates to the neglect of fulfilling the oath; and *oath upon*, which seems to allude to swearing vainly, viz. upon trivial and common occasions, a practice very usual with the Jews, and too frequent among Christians; yet with this difference, that the Jewish error seems to have arisen from superstition, as ours does from profaneness.

[To the edifying your faith.] Many MSS. read it thus, and our author follows them; and the sense is better supported by our author's than by our present reading; for *edification* is a more consistent term with the *oath*, which we have indeed, by the liberty we have taken of transposing the genitive case in our English version, a little mended it; for the use of *edifying* is better sense than the *edifying of us*, which yet is the literal translation of *edificationem nostram*.

[Blessing.] Instead of the imperative, *bless*, as we now read it, our author's copy seems to have read it in the participle *blessing*, *et benedicens*. Bishop Fell. [Who murmureth not.] *Sine querela*, saith our author; blameless, *et querela*, say the LXX; one who maketh no complaint, brings it most to our author's purpose; tho' in all likelihood the original intent of the character was to represent him as a person of whom no complaint could be justly made. I have given it, however, our Author's own turn, tho' the Hebrew favours the blameless character.

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of Thanksgiving we have apostolick examples in the Acts; And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and gave thanks to God, and the prisoners heard them. Finally, St. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, hath given this advice; Do all things (^k chearfully and from a principle of love,) without murmurings and disputings, that no complaint may proceed either from you or against you; but that ye may be sons of God without rebuke.

15. Thus we read in the book of Genesis; God tempted Abraham, and said unto him, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee to the ^l hilly land, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And again in Deuteronomy; The Lord your God proveth you, to know, whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul. Thus also in the Wisdom of Solomon; Though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality: And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded; for God proved them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering; and in time there shall be a due regard to them, they shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever. Finally, thus we read in the History of the Maccabees; Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness?

16. Thus we read in the ^m Wisdom of Solomon; A true witness delivereth a soul from evil. And again in the same book; Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so much beyond all that they look'd for: And they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit shall say within themselves, This was he whom we sometimes had in derision, and made a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. We wearied our selves in the way of wickedness and destruction; yea we have gone through deserts where there lay no way, but as for the way of the Lord we have not known it. What hath pride profited us, or what good have riches with our vaunting of them brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. Thus in the ^{cxv} (alias ^{cxvi}) psalm; Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. And again in the ^{cxxv} (alias ^{cxxvi}) psalm; They who sow in tears shall reap in joy; As they went forth they wept, scattering their seed, but as they come again they shall come with joy, bringing their sheaves

^k Chearfully, and from a principle of love.] We read in the verse preceding, To will and to do of his good pleasure; now our author seems to have design'd concluding the sense of the 12th verse with the words, To will and to do, and so to have connected the subsequent words of good pleasure (for he is not expressed in the original) with the doing all things without murmuring; pro dilectione, or dilectionis, as some MSS. read it. The one reading recommends the doing all things chearfully, the other from a principle of love. In my construction I have taken both in. *Sine quaerela* here occurs again as before, and I have given such a turn to it as may best accommodate it to the passage it stands in.

^l Hilly land.] *Ferram altam*, as some MSS. of our author read it; which follow the ^{lxx} version of the ^{lxx}. The land of *Moriah* was indeed a portion of that land near which *Jerusalem* was built, and consisted of divers ridges of hills, upon one of which this sacrifice was to be made, and so was very properly a type of Christ, who in process of time was to be offered up a sacrifice by the will of his father upon one of the same.

^m Wisdom of Solomon.] By this manner of our Author's quoting passages from the book of *Proverbs*, and from the wisdom of *Solomon*, and connecting them together in his usual way with an *et cetera*, as he often does, when he cites different passages out of the same book; and by his entitling the book of *Proverbs* the wisdom of *Solomon*; (I say by all these circumstances) one is tempted to suspect, that those two books were esteemed of as but one in the days of our author.

ⁿ A true witness.] If in a civil cause a true witness did so much service, much more in the cause of Religion. Bp. Fell.

A. D. 249. *with them.* Thus likewise we read in St. John's gospel; *He that loveth his*
 John 12. 25. *life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto*
 Matt. 10. 19, *life eternal.* And in that of St. Matthew; *But when they deliver you up, take*
 20. *no thought, how or what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the*
 Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And again in that of St. John;
 John 16. 2, 3. *The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God good*
 service; and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known
 Matt. 5. 10. *the Father, nor me.* Thus again in St. Matthew; *Blessed are they which are*
 persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And again
 Matt. 10. 28, *in the same evangelist; Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to*
 32, 33. *kill the soul; but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in*
 And ibid. 22. *hell.* And a little farther; *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I*
 confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me
 before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. But
 he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. To the same pur-
 Luke 6. 22, 23. *pose we read our Saviour declaring in St. Luke's gospel; Blessed are ye when*
 men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their communion,
 and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's
 sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is
 Chap. 18. 19, *great in heaven.* And again in the same evangelist; *Verily I say unto you,*
 30. *There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or*
 children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive seven times as
 much in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. To the
 same purpose of martyrdom we read in the book of Revelations; And
 Revel. 6. 9, *when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them*
 10, 11. *that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*
 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, *How long, O Lord, holy and true,*
 dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto
 them, *That they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants*
 also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfil-
 led. And again in the same book; After this I beheld, and lo a great mul-
 Revel. 7. 9, 10, *titude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people,*
 13, 14, 15, *and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with*
 16, 17. *white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying,*
 Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.
 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, *What are these which are*
 arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir,
 thou knowest. And he said unto me, *These are they which came out of great*
 tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood
 of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him
 day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell
 among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither
 shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: For the Lamb which is in the
 midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains
 of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Thus again;
 Revel. 2. 7, *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the*
 10. *midst of the paradise of my God.* And a little farther; *Be thou faithful un-*
 to death, and I will give thee a crown of life. And again in another chap-
 Revel. 16. 15. *ter; Blessed are they that watch, and that keep their garments, lest they*
 walk naked, and their shame be seen. Thus likewise we read in the ii^d epistle
 2 Tim. 4. 6, to Timothy; *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is*
 7, 8. *at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept*

[Departure.] Assumption is both here, and in epist. 10. is our author's word; so that it should seem
 hence that what we now read *assumption* was read by our author *assumption to heaven*;
 which indeed was a more emphatical expression for the martyrs speedy arrival there. See §. the last, on
 the exhortation to martyrdom. N. B. Tertullian ad Scorpian, ch. 13. reads it *deversionis*.

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the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Thus St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans; *We are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.* Once more in the cxviiith (alias cxixth) psalm it is thus written; *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord; Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and seek him with their whole heart.* A. D. 249.
Rom. 8. 16.
Psalm 119. 1, 2.

17. Thus St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans; *The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* And in the book of ^P Maccabees we read to the same purpose; *O Lord, who hast the holy knowledge, it is manifest, that whereas I might have been delivered from death, I (now) endure sore pains in body by being beaten; but in soul am well content to suffer these things, because I fear him.* And again in the same book; *Thou like a fury art taking us out of this present life; but the King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto everlasting life.* And again; *It is good being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by him.* As for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. And again in the same book; *Thou hast power over men; and though thou art corruptible, thou dost what thou wilt, yet think not that our nation is forsaken of God: But abide a while, and behold his great power, how he will torment thee and thy seed.* Once more to the same purpose; *Be not deceived without cause; for we suffer these things for our selves, having sinned against our God; but think not, thou that takest in hand to strive against God, that thou shalt escape unpunished.* §. 17.
That our sufferings here, are not to be compared with our reward hereafter.
Rom. 8. 18.
2 Macc. 6. 30.
2 Macc. 7. 9.
Ibid. v. 14.
2 Macc. 7. 16, 17, 18, 19.

18. Thus we find our selves directed in the book of Deuteronomy; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* Thus also we read in the gospel written by St. Matthew; *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not my disciple.* And to the same purpose St. Paul hath expressed himself in his epistle to the Romans; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter; nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, for his sake, who loved us.* §. 18.
That nothing is to be preferred before the love of God and Christ.
Deut. 6. 5.
Matt. 10. 37.
Rom. 8. 35, 36, 37.
Psalm 44. 22.

19. Thus we read (in St. John's gospel) our Saviour saying of himself; *I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* And (in St. Matthew's) *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And again in our daily prayer; *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.* And in the same gospel; *Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven; (he) is the man who shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And in St. Luke to the same purpose; *And that servant which knew his Lord's* §. 19.
That we are not to follow our own will, but the will of God.
John 6. 38.
Matt. 26. 39.
Matt. 6. 10.
Matt. 7. 21.
Luke 12. 47.

^P Maccabees.] These quotations from the Maccabees are not in the common printed copies; but several MSS. retaining them, bishop Fell hath thought fit to give them a place in his text.

^{My disciple.}] Our present copies of this passage in St. Matthew read it, *it is not worthy of me, as before.* But our author seems to have read it as St. Luke hath expressed it, (*Luke 14. 26.*) *is not* (or cannot be) *my disciple.*

^{For his sake.}] *Propter* in *qui dilexisti*, our author reads; in our present copies of the original *ὑπὲρ* *ἡμῶν* which some MSS. read *διὰ τὴν ἀγαπῆν* *ἡμῶν*, *propter eum qui dilexit*, for his sake who loved us, as I have here translated it.

^{Daily prayer.}] Observe here, that the Lord's prayer was in daily use among the christians of our author's time.

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will,

A. D. 249. will, and did not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes. Once more, St. John in his epistle hath delivered himself to like effect; But he that doth the will of God abideth for ever, even as God himself abideth for ever.

§. 20. Thus we read in the cxth (alias cxith) psalm; The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And the very same expression and thought are found in the Wisdom of Solomon; To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And in the Proverbs of the same author; Happy is the man that feareth alway. And in Isaiah; Upon whom should I look, but upon the man who is humble, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word? And in the book of Genesis; The angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. Again we are directed in the book of psalms; To serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice unto him with trembling. And in the xxxiii^d (alias xxxivth) psalm we read to like purpose; O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. And again in the Psal. 19. 9. xviiith (alias xixth) psalm; The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever.

§. 21. Thus we read in St. Luke's gospel; Judge not, that ye be not judged; condemn not, that ye be not condemned. And in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans; Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand. And again in the same epistle; Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whatsoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self, seeing thou dost the same things, which thou judgest in him. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do evil, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Thus the same apostle in his ist epistle to the Corinthians; Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. And again; If any man thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

§. 22. Thus in our daily prayer recorded by the evangelist; Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And again in another evangelist; When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. And again; With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

§. 23. Thus St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans; Recompence no man evil for evil. And again; Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. And in the book of Revelations; And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand; he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be still more righteous; and he that is holy, let him be more holy still. And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me; to give every man as his work shall be.

§. 24. Thus we read in St. John's gospel our Saviour saying; I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. And again; I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.

John 14. 6. Proverbs of the same author. Here again, as in other places of our author, it is observable how he takes it for granted, that Solomon wrote both the book of Ecclesiasticus and the book of Proverbs. So that the preface which are now prefixed to Ecclesiasticus in our common versions, and one of them to our Greek, should hence seem to have been unknown to our author. Which I have judged in this instead of what is now in the text, which is our present reading; our author seems to have read it, and to have used it, and to have said, eadem agis que judicatis his words. And so afterwards instead of remission arguuntur, which is our present reading in the 34th verse, he seems to have read, et non arguuntur; his words are, et non arguuntur.

25. Thus we read in St. John's gospel; *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* And again; *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye shall have no life in you.*

A. D. 249.
§. 25.
That no man
can enter into
the kingdom
of God, except
he be regene-
rate and bap-
tized.

26. Thus in St. Paul's 1st epistle to the Corinthians; *Know ye not, that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.* And in St. Matthew's gospel; *Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire. And again; Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Yet farther from the same evangelist; *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* And St. Paul recommends it to the Philippians, *That they should shine as lights in the world.*

John 3. 5, 6.
John 6. 53.
§. 26.
That baptism
and the eu-
charist are
unprofitable,
without a
suitable life.
1 Cor. 9. 24,
25.
Matt. 3. 10.
Matt. 7. 22,
23.
Matt. 5. 16.
Philip. 2. 15.

27. Thus we read in St. John's gospel our Saviour speaking to the man whom he had healed; *Behold thou art made whole: Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* Thus St. Paul in his former epistle to the Corinthians; *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.* And we find the same observation in the book of Chronicles; *The Lord is with you, whilst ye be with him; if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.*

§. 27.
That the grace
of baptism
will be for-
feited by sin.
John 5. 14.
1 Cor. 3. 16,
17.
2 Chron. 15. 2.

28. Thus our Lord hath expressed himself upon this subject in St. Matthew's gospel; *Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* And in St. Mark to the same purpose; *All sins shall be forgiven unto men, and blasphemies. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.* Thus likewise we read in the 1st book of Samuel; *If one man sin against another, there is room for intercession; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?*

§. 28.
That the
church cannot
pardon sins
committed a-
gainst God.
Matt. 12. 31.
Mark 3. 28,
29.
1 Sam. 2. 15.

29. Thus we read in St. Luke's gospel; *Ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake.* And in St. John's; *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out*

§. 29.
The hatred
which christi-
ans were so
unduly fore-
told before-
hand.

* *Should shine.* [quintus] this we translate indicatively, (*Ye do shine;*) but our author understood it imperatively, (*Do ye shine*) and accordingly hath rendred it, *Lucetis.*

* *That the church cannot pardon, &c.* This must be understood with some alleviation, and only with regard to the most heinous sins; or else it will be found contradictory to our author's known opinion in the case of the lapsed, and to his whole conduct with regard to offenders, whom he ever admitted to terms of penance. It is certain from his 17th epistle, that he looked upon those sins as less heinous, which were not directly committed against God; (for he expresseth himself thus upon the occasion, *in minoribus delictis qua non in dominum committuntur;*) and he distinguishes between such sins and others, which he calls *gravissimis et extremis delictis;* viz. such as the lapsed had committed by their apostacy; which however in the year afterwards, viz. A. D. 250. he thought fit to be pardoned, upon the criminal's submission to penitential discipline. Whether the exigencies of the church required then a relaxation of the rigour, which he expresseth in this §. or whether he judged the case to be discretionary, and the management alterable, as times and circumstances should advise, the title of this §. (*non posse in ecclesia remitti ei, qui in Deum deliquerit*) is somewhat harder and more rigorous than what he exemplified in practice, when he was farther settled in his government of the church. This whole argument is professedly handled in ch. 2. part. 2. §. 1. Of the penitential discipline of the primitive church.

* *There is room for intercession.* They shall pray for him, say the LXX; and our author follows them. We read it, *The judge shall judge him.* The meaning is, the magistrate shall end the controversy, and the defendant shall have a fair hearing by proper council. But in offences committed directly against God, which he hath declared he will not pardon, what advocate will undertake the cause? 'Tis spoken according to the manner of men; where the person of the prince is immediately concerned in the offence, 'tis harder to find an intercessor than where his laws in general are the only sufferers. In both cases his laws are interested; but when his laws and his person too are supposed to be outraged, forgive-ness is not so easy to be obtained.

Luke 21. 17.
John 15. 18.

of

A. D. 249. of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you; The servant is not greater than the Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

§. 30. 30. Thus Solomon advises; When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it. And in the book of Deuteronomy we read to the same purpose; When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee, and it will be sin in thee: That which is gone out of thy lips, thou shalt keep and perform, even a free-will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth. Thus in the xlixth (alias

Psal. 50. 14, 1st) psalm; Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. And in a case of this kind we read the

Acts 5. 3, 4 apostle's exhortation with Ananias; Why hath satan filled thine heart, to lye to the Holy Ghost? When the land was sold, was it not in thine own power? Thou hast not lyed unto men, but unto God. And in the prophet Jeremiah; Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord² by halves.

§. 31. 31. Thus we read in St. John's gospel; He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. Thus likewise it is written in the 1st psalm; Wherefore the ungodly shall not² rise again in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

§. 32. 32. Thus we read in the book of Genesis; I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy^b pains; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, thy^c resort and refuge shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And in St. Matthew's gospel we find our blessed Lord expressing himself upon this subject to the following purpose; All men cannot receive this saying. Save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother's womb; and there were some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

And in St. Luke; The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage. Neither can they dye any more; for they are equal unto the angels of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him. Thus also we read in

[By halves.] Negligenter, saith our author, from the LXX's ἀμάρτυς we read it (as the vulgar Latin and Hebrew do) deceitfully; and add, Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood. The propriety of which passage to our author's purpose is founded in the Jewish custom of devoting the Canaanites to slaughter by a solemn anathema, when they entered into war with them. So that if afterwards they spared them, they were held guilty of the breach of a solemn vow.

[Rise again.] So the LXX, ἀναστρέφω which our author literally and truly translates *resurgens*, *rise again*; we translate it from the Hebrew, *shall not stand*; viz. *shall be cast*. The Jews had hence inferred, that themselves alone (to whom they had appropriated the name of righteous) should *rise again*; and that the wicked (who were all but themselves) should not. But it is not said that the ungodly shall not *rise again*; only that they shall not be able to *stand*, to make good their cause, in the judgment; they shall be cast upon irayl; *causa cadens*, and so shall not mix with the congregation of the righteous in that day. The LXX, 'tis likely, might have imbibed the opinion of their country-men; and to that notion of theirs we may probably enough ascribe their translation, as now it stands, ἀναστρέφω *rise again*.

[Pain.] Tristitia tua & gemitus tuus; saith our author, from the LXX's λύπη & πένθος we render it from the Hebrew, *Thy sorrow, and thy conception*. The meaning of all is, the sorrow of pregnancy and child-bearing.

[Resort and refuge.] I have given what I take to be the meaning of our author in his word *conversio*, and of the LXX in their ἀναστρέφω *resurgens*; *resort* and *refuge* upon all occasions; for *decur* & *tusamen* are manly offices. The turn of mind upon all occasions may be signified by the general word *conversio*; our translation is more *special*, and seems less proper when we render it *desire*; tho' it be indeed the literal construction of the Hebrew text.

St. Paul's 1st epistle to the Corinthians; It is good for a man not to touch a woman: Nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife; and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband; and likewise the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud you not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give your selves unto prayer, and come together again, that satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, not of commandment: For I would that all men were even as I my self; but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. And again; He that is unmarried careth for the things which belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things which are of the world, how he may please his wife. So also the unmarried woman, (and the virgin) careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Thus in the book of Exodus, when God commanded Moses to sanctify the people against the third day, he sanctified them accordingly, and added; *Be ready; and come not at your wives during the three days.* Thus we find it also recorded in the 1st book of Samuel; *The priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under my hand, but there is an hallowed loaf, and if the young men have kept themselves from women, they may eat it.* Once more in the book of the Revelations; *These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins; these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*

33. Thus we read in St. John's gospel; *The Father judgeth nothing, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. And in the lxxith (aliàs lxxii^d) psalm; Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son; that he may judge thy people with righteousness. And in the book of Genesis; The Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.*

34. Thus the prophet *Jeremiah* hath represented the Lord saying; *Walk not in the way of the heathen.* And that we ought to separate our selves from the heathen, to prevent our being partakers of their sin and punishment, observe what is written in the book of *Revelations*; *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. He hath rewarded her double for what she hath done to you; and in the cup which she hath filled, he hath filled to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and*

^d [Cor. 7.] The context of what is cited from this chapter (especially verse 16.) will give us a true key to the meaning of our author, and of other early fathers, who speak so largely in the praise of virginity; they did it, as St. Paul himself did, in regard to the *present distress*, and to the incumbrances of that warfare, which lay so heavy upon the first professors of the gospel. Hence they were induced to make the most of every text, which touched upon the praises of what was at that time so very convenient for them; yet they did not condemn the contrary state, nor lay upon any the obligation of a vow, which it might not perhaps be in their power to keep. In the 34th verse the reading of our author differeth a little from our present reading, where he mentioneth the unmarried woman, and the virgin carth, &c. the words, and the virgin, are taken from those MSS. which read it thus—
 ἡ ἀγαθή καὶ ἡ παρθένος· ὁ δὲ ἀγαθὸς μετὰ τὴν εὐαγγέλιον.

^c *Nesbitt.*] Our present copies read it, *no man*.

² From the Lord.] This was the general sense of the *Ante-nicene* fathers, That the *Mefias* was the angel, who was chief minister under God the Father of all the great transactions with the patriarchs; who appeared to *Abraham*, *Mefes*, &c. and was the executioner of God's vengeance upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrath*. *The Lord*, the Son, *raised from the Lord the Father out of heaven*. See more of this in note upon §. c. of the 1st book of *Testimonies against the Jews*.

6. *He hath rewarded.* So our author in the preterperfect tense of the indicative mood; which makes the sense more clear than as our present copies represent it in the imperative, *Reward her, &c.*

A. D. 149. lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow is given to her; for she hath said in her heart, I am a queen, and can never be a widow, and shall see no sorrow; therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God, who shall judge her. And the Kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her. Once more out of the prophet Isaiah; Go ye out of the midst of her, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord.

§. 35. Thus we read in Solomon's book of Ecclesiasticus; Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto me? for the Most High is long suffering before he recompenceth. And in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans; Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds.

§. 36. Observe to this purpose what is written in the book of Revelations; And there came one of the seven angels, who had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the Kings of the earth have committed fornication: And I saw a woman sitting upon a beast; and the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication throughout the whole earth. And St. Paul in his epistle to Timothy thus expresseth himself; Let the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but such as becometh women professing godliness with good works. Thus St. Peter in his epistle to the christians of Pontus; Whose (viz. the wives) adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on apparel; but let it be the inward ornament of the heart. And again in the book of *Genesis; Tamar covered herself with a vail, and decked herself; and when Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot.

§. 37. Thus St. Peter in his epistle to the christians of Pontus cautions them; Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other mens matters; but only as a christian.

§. 38. Thus St. Paul adviseth in his epistle to the Romans; Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

§. 39. St. Peter in his forenamed epistle to the christians of Pontus hath thus written; Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but submitted himself even to an unrighteous judge. Thus also St. Paul hath observed to the Philippians of our Saviour; That though he was appointed to appear in the form of God, he did not boast of his equality

§. 39. That Christ hath left us an example how to live.

1 Pet. 2. 21, 22, 23. Philip. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Bishop Fell.

Unrighteous. Our present copies read, *neglectis dominum*; to him that judgeth righteously; meaning God. But our author seems to have read it, *neglectis adinam*; meaning Calaphas, or Pilate, who were unrighteous judges. Bishop Fell.

In the form, &c. In *figura Dei constitutus*, saith our author; in *effigie*, saith Terullian advers. Marcion. 1. 1. 20. (Bishop Fell.) Neither of them seemed to mean differently from our English version.

Did not boast of his equality. I cannot acquiesce in our common construction of the words, *thoughts* is no robbery, &c. as if they intimated any thing like to his claiming of an equality. Because the apostle here is speaking of his humility and condescension, and rather represents him as receding from his just rights, than as insisting on them. Tho' he received so much power from his Father, and was appointed to represent his person; yet when he came to suffer, he did not insist on his first pretensions; did not

seem

lity with God, but emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Thus St. John hath represented our Saviour propounding his own example; *If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* A. D. 149-
John 13. 14; 15.

40. Thus St. Matthew hath represented our blessed Lord discoursing; *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth, that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* And just before; *Therefore when thou dost thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men: Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.* S. 40.
That working should be done by christians with vain boasting.
Matt. 6. 3, 4, and 5.

41. Let not foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, be so much as named amongst you; faith St. Paul to the Ephesians. S. 41.
Foolish talk and scurrility re be avoided.
Ephes. 5. 3, 4.

42. Thus in the book of Genesis we read; *That Abraham believed in the Lord; and it was counted to him for righteousness.* And in Isaiah; *If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand.* And in St. Matthew's gospel we find our Saviour blaming St. Peter for his want of faith; *O thou, of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* And again in the same evangelist we may observe him saying to the rest of his disciples; *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* Thus again St. Mark hath rehearsed his promise to his disciples; *What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.* Yet again; *All things are possible to him that believeth.* And in the prophet Habakkuk; *The just shall live by faith in me.* And in the prophet Daniel we read the deliverance of Ananias, Azarias and Misael from the fire, for their trust in God. S. 42.
That faith is all in all; and will qualify us for all attainments.
Genes. 15. 6.
Isai. 7. 9.
Matt. 14. 31.
Matt. 17. 20.
Mark 11. 24.
Mark 9. 23.
Habak. 2. 4.
Dan. 3. 17.

43. In the Acts of the Apostles we read of the eunuch putting the question to Philip; *See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?* And Philip said; *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.* S. 43.
That true faith is an immediate qualification for baptism.
Acts 8. 36, 37.

44. St. Paul hath thus declared his opinion in his former epistle to the Corinthians; *Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And a little farther; Now therefore there is utterly a fault amongst you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* S. 44.
That christians should not go to law before an heathen magistrate, upon any dispute arising among them.
1 Cor. 6. 1, 2, and 7, 8, 9.

seem (then) to think that he had any claim to the Divinity, or might assume it; boasted not (then) of his near alliance to the Deity, but instead of it emptied himself, behaved and acted like a person void of any such powers. Novatian in his book *De Trinitate*, ch. 17. understands our apostle in this sense: Which, I must acknowledge, with Mr. Le Clerc, seems to me the most natural and easy. See Mr. Le Clerc upon the place in his supplement to Dr. Hammond; and Dr. Wherry, who gives instances out of Hieronymus, wherein the words *agnosca synagoga* which we translate, *thinking a robbery*; plainly signify, *catching at an opportunity, embracing any thing as extremely desirable.*

[shall not understand.] See 1st book of Testimonies, S. 5. where the variation of our author from our vulgar reading is observed.

[Faith in me.] See what is observed upon our author's version of this passage in S. 5. of the 1st book of Testimonies.

[That true faith.] *Poss. enim fasces consequi, qui veri crediderit. Consecratio* is put by our author for baptism, in S. 27. of this book; and by Tertullian lib. de Baptismo. cap. 19. *si quis pondus intellegat baptismi, magis timebitur consecrationem.* (Bishop Hall.) It was indeed the attainment of that, which all the preparatory discipline of catechumens was designed to fit them for; it was what the catechumens aimed at in their submission to such discipline, to be admitted into the church by the rite of baptism.

A. D. 249. Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud; and that your brethren. Know ye not; that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

§. 45. That hope respects things future; and therefore that our faith ought to wait patiently for such things as are promised. Rom. 8. 24, 25. 45. St. Paul hath expressed himself in his epistle to the Romans in the following manner; *We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

§. 46. That women should keep silence in the church. 46. Thus St. Paul hath directed in his former epistle to the Corinthians; *Let your women keep silence in the churches; and if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home. And in another epistle to Timothy thus; Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was.*

1 Cor. 14. 34. 35. 47. Thus the prophet Hosea hath represented the case of the children of Israel, in the following expostulation; *Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel, for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the Land; because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. But swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, are spread through the land, and blood is added to blood: Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish; with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea shall be taken away, so that there shall be no one left to find fault with, or to reprove his neighbour.*

Isai. 59. 1, 2. 3, 4. Thus also we read in the prophet Isaiah; *Do ye think (saith he) the hand of the Lord shortened, that it cannot save? Or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear? Nay, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not take pity. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken wickedly, your tongue hath uttered injustice. None mentioneth justice, nor is there any such thing as a true judgment; they trust in vanity, they speak lies, they conceive treachery, and bring forth mischief. Thus likewise in the prophet Zephaniah; Let all things be consumed from off the land, saith the Lord; let man and beast be consumed; let the fowls of the heaven and the fishes of the sea be consumed, and I will cut off the wicked from the face of the earth.*

§. 48. Thus we read in the xivth (alias xvth) psalm; *He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent; he that doth these things shall never be moved. And in the prophet Ezekiel; But if a man be just, he will not oppress any: He will restore to the debtor his pledge; he will spoil none by violence; he will give his bread to the hungry; will cover the naked with a garment; and will not give forth upon usury. And in the book of Deuteronomy; Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother, usury of money, or usury of victuals.*

So that there shall be no one left, &c.] i. e. The contagion is so general, that there is no sound part left; none who can, with decency, reprove his neighbour, all being involved in the spreading guilt. Among many explications which have been given of this passage, I have chosen that which the sense will bear as well as any other; and which our author's words most favour.

All things.] Defectum deficiat, iniquitas induit. so the LXX and our author, leaving *omnia* to be understood; which I have supplied, because our language will not bear such an ellipsis. The Hebrew saith expressly, *I will cause all things to fail.*

[Not to take usury.] The usury which was so generally condemned by the earliest ecclesiastical writers, must have been of a different nature from that of taking a valuable consideration for the use of money, which hath all the reason and justice in the world to support it. Somewhat must needs have been implied in the practice, which bore hard upon the necessities of the poor; extorted from them undue premiums, for delay of payment, or unreasonable gain for the continuance of the loan. If the use of money hath a proper value due to it, (as every body knows it hath) merely to receive that value, could not possibly come under any character of disadvantage; tho' charity may in certain circumstances persuade a man to recede from his right of receiving it.

[Ezekiel.] In this, as in other citations from the Old Testament, our author followeth the LXX, who here exhibit the sense more clearly than our English version.

49. Thus

49. Thus in the gospel written by St. Luke we find our blessed Lord saying to his disciples; *If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?* A. D. 249. §. 49. That we are to love our enemies. And in St. Matthew; *Love your enemies, and pray for them who persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust.* Luke 6. 32. Matt. 5. 44. 45.

50. This Solomon hath hinted to us in his book of Proverbs; *Speak not in the ears of a fool, lest when he hears thee, he despise the wisdom of thy words.* §. 50. That the mysteries of faith are not to be profaned, by being published to the unilluminated. And St. Matthew in his gospel; *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* Prov. 23. 9. Matt. 7. 6. §. 51. That no one should glory in his works.

51. Thus Solomon adviseth in his book of Ecclesiasticus; *Vaunt not thyself in doing thy business.* §. 51. That no one should glory in his works. And in St. Luke's gospel we read our blessed Lord observing to our purpose in the following manner; *Which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattel, will presently say unto him when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat; and will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drank, and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink. Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things which were commanded him? So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which were commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Eccles. 10. 26. Luke 17. 7, 8, 9, 10.

52. Thus we read in the book of Deuteronomy the proposals made by Moses to the children of Israel; *I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore chuse life, that you may live.* §. 52. That faith, and its contrary, depend upon free choice. And in Isaiah's prophecy; *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse, and will not hearken unto me, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* Dent. 30. 19. Isai. 1. 19, 20. And in the gospel of St. Luke we find our Lord telling the Jews, *That the kingdom of God was within them.* Luke 17. 21.

53. Thus St. Paul hath expressed himself upon the subject in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians; *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known.* §. 53. That our faith ought to be re-signed and simple, since the depths of providence are unfathomable. Thus also Solomon in the book of Wisdom adviseth, *To seek the Lord in simplicity of heart.* 1 Cor. 13. 12. Wisdom 1. 1. And hath told us in his Proverbs, *That he who walketh in simplicity, walketh in safety.* Prov. 10. 9. And hath cautioned us in his book of Ec-

* §. 50.] It is not easy to assign a certain reason for the scrupulosity which obtained so generally among the antient fathers, as to publishing the most solemn acts of christian worship, or suffering them to be commonly known. From this secrecy of theirs proceeded those scandalous suggestions of their enemies against them, that they worshipped an ass's head; that they murdered infants, and fed upon them in their celebration of the holy eucharist; that they had promiscuous copulations, &c. in their (antelucanis catibus) early assemblies for worship. 'Tis not impossible that herein they might a little symbolize with the general usage and persuasion of those about them, whose religion had its arcana, its more hidden mysteries, into the secret of which none were let but the initiated. Thus we have a verse of Orpheus, cited by Justin Martyr in Cohert. ad Gracos.

Οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἷς δῖμος ἐστὶ δούρατ' ἱερὸν ἔχοντα βιβλάδας

Πᾶσι δὲ μυστ'

And again.

Procul, O procul, este profani,

Conclamat vates totaque absistite ludo. Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. v. 258, 259.

Or perhaps they were afraid of exposing their most solemn parts of worship to the derision and contempt of the heathens; and so their reverence for the holy eucharist might induce them to celebrate it, without suffering any to be present but the initiated and baptized. For even their Catechumens were kept strangers to it; nor would they ever go far into explications of it in their popular discourses, where the assembly was promiscuous, but only touched upon it in dark hints, and with a professed reserve.

* Vaunt nat.] Be not over-wise, say the LXX, and our English version. Noli te extollere, saith our author, as saith the vulgar Latin.

* Within them.] From this citation thus applied, 'tis evident, that our author thought, sufficient means of grace resistible; and that he placed their efficacy, or inefficacy, to the account of human liberty.

* In simplicity.] So the LXX, and our author: We read it uprightly; from the Hebrew, which hath it, in integrity.

T

clesiasticus;

A. D. 249.
Eccles. 3.
Eccles. 7. 16.
Isai. 29. 15.
1 Macc. 2. 60.
Rom. 11. 33.
2 Tim. 2. 23.
24.
§. 54.
That no one
is free from
pollution and
sin.
Job 14. 4.
Psal 51. 8.
1 John 1. 8.
§. 55.
That we
should not
aim at plea-
sing men, but
God.
Psal. 53. 5.
Galat. 1. 10.
1 Cor. 5. 10.
§. 56.
That nothing
is hid from
God.
Prov. 15. 3.
Jer. 23. 23.
24.
1 Sam. 16. 7.
Revel. 2. 23.
Psal. 19. 12.
2 Cor. 5. 10.

clesiasticus; Not to seek out the things which are too hard for us; neither to search out the things which are above our strength. And again he saith in his book of Ecclesiastes; Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over-wise. The prophet Isaiah hath denounced a woe to such as are conceited of their own cunning, and self-sufficient in the secret thoughts of their hearts. We read in the book of Maccabees, That Daniel for his integrity (the simplicity of his manners) was delivered from the mouth of lions. And St. Paul upon a view of God's unsearchable dealings, breaks out into the following rapture; O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellour? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and in him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. The same apostle hath advised Timothy to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, as knowing that they do gender strifes. Whereas the servant of the Lord must not strive, but must be gentle unto all.

§. 54. Thus holy Job puts the question; *Who is there free from pollution? Not one; although he liveth but a single day upon the earth.* And the Psalmist makes this humble acknowledgment to God in the 1th (alias 11th) psalm; *Behold I was formed in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* And St. John to the same purpose writeth thus; *If we say, that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.*

§. 55. In the 11th (alias 111th) psalm 'tis written; *That the men-pleasers are put to confusion, because God hath despised them.* And St. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians saith; *If I sought to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

§. 56. Thus we find it written in the *Wisdom of Solomon; The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* And in the prophet Jeremiah; *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off. If a man hide himself in secret places, shall I not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?* And in the 1st book of Samuel; *Man looketh on the countenance, but God looketh on the heart.* And in the book of Revelations; *And all the churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.* And in the xviiith (alias xixth) psalm; *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults.* And again in the ii^d epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians; *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Conceited -- and self-sufficient.] This I suppose to be the meaning of the place, tho' I could think of no one word in our language which would reach the spirit of our author's *arguti in semet ipsis*. The LXX read it *παύροις* and *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* *παύροις*.

Integrity.] *Ἐν τῇ ἀπλότητι* simplicity. But *ἀπλότης* in Greek, and *simplicitas* in Latin, have a meaning which is hardly reached by our English word *simplicity*.

In him.] So our author, *in ipso*; but our present reading is, *ἐν αὐτῷ* to him.

Who is there, &c.] Whether the LXX, whom our author followeth, have hit upon the true sense, or not, 'tis evident, from his application of this passage, that he believed the pollution of guilt to be communicated by descent from father to son, and consequently that he was no stranger to the doctrine of original sin, since he who liveth but a single day upon the earth must needs be free from any personal transgression. And the following citation from psal. 51. 6. is a farther proof of our author's sentiments. See note [their birth] in §. 4. of epistle 64.

Men-pleasers.] Hypocrites, as some render it; *Those who have despised thee*, as others, and we amongst them, with greatest appearance of truth and propriety. But it is not here my business to translate the scriptures in the most proper manner; I am to follow our author, and to give my reader his sentiments; whether he interprets the scriptures right or not. Here, as usually elsewhere, he followeth the LXX, who read *ἀνδραγάτας*.

Wisdom of Solomon.] Observe how promiscuously our author cites the works of Solomon; entrusting in this place his Proverbs, his Wisdom.

I am, &c.] Whether this be put by way of assertion, *I am*, as the LXX and our author put it; or by way of question, *Am I?* as we render it from the Hebrew, the design is the same; viz. To represent God, as always near to us in the effects of his wisdom and power.

57. We read the holy Psalmist speaking of himself to the following purpose in the cxviiith (alias cviiith) psalm; The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death. And in the lxxxviiith (alias lxxxixth) psalm it is thus written; I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from them. And in the prophet Malachi; He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of gold and silver, and shall purify the sons of Levi. And in St. Matthew's gospel; ⁸ Thou shalt by no means go out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

58. In the book of Genesis it is written as followeth; The Lord said unto Adam, Because thou hast hearkned unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I alone I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; Cursed is the ground for thy sake: In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Again in the same book 'tis said of Enoch, That he pleased God, and was not afterwards to be found, because God translated him. And in the prophet Isaiah; All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And in Ezekiel; They say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we have given up the ghost: Therefore prophesy and say unto them; thus saith the Lord, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and will bring you into the land of Israel: And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I will place you in your own land; and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken it, and I will perform it, saith the Lord. Thus in the Wisdom of Solomon we read of Enoch, That he was taken away speedily, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, for his soul pleased God. And in the lxxxiii^d (alias lxxxivth) psalm; How amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth for the courts of the Lord. And in St. Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians; I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him. Again in his ist epistle to the Corinthians; Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it dye. And a little farther; One star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead: It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Once more in the same chapter; This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality: Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up.

[⁸ Thou shalt by no means, &c.] The design of this citation is not very clear. If our author understood the passage as alluding only to a temporal punishment; then his meaning by it must be, that when the uttermost farthing was paid, when the intent of the imprisonment (the punishment) was answered, the party suffering it should be let go free. But if he understood the passage as alluding to a future punishment, his design in quoting it must be, to distinguish that punishment from such corrections as he had mentioned before; That tho' other visitations were designed to reform and amend, and then were to have a period; yet from thence, from the punishment of hell, there should be no escape. So the emphasis lies according to this view upon the word thence.

[^h Alone.] The LXX have this word *monos* and our author follows them; tho' others omit it. [Herb.] *χρίον* say the LXX, and the Hebrew the same. Our author, *pabulum*; or, as some MSS. read it, *edes panem tuum de pabulo agri*. The meaning is, that Adam hence was doomed to hard fare and mean accommodations. Some hence inferred, that till the flood no flesh was eaten. [^k pleased.] *Εὐαρεστησεν*, say the LXX; we say in our English version from the Hebrew, *walked with God*; i. e. lived according to God's will.

lowed

A. D. 149. lowed up in the issue of the struggle. O death, where is thy sting? O death, where are now all thy conflicts? Again we read in St. John's gospel; Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me before the foundation of the world. And in St. Luke's; Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. And again in St. John's; If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I.

§. 59. Thus we read in the book of Wisdom; They counted all the idols of the heathen to be gods, which neither have the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear, nor fingers of hands to handle; and as for their feet they are slow to go; for man made them, and he that borrowed his own spirit fashioned them; but no man can make a god like unto himself. For being mortal he worketh a thing with wicked hands, for he himself is better than the things which he worshippeth; whereas he lived once, but they never. And again in the same book we find it written to the same purpose; Neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the work-master, but deemed either fire, or wind, or the quick air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the sun and moon, to be the gods which govern the world: With whose beauty if they being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much more beautiful the Lord of them is; but if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier he is who made them. And in the cxxxivth (alias cxxxvth) psalm, we thus read; The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of mens hands: They have mouths but they speak not, eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. May they who make them be like unto them, and so may be all such as put their trust in them! Thus likewise in the xcvith (alias xcvith) psalm; All the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. In the book of Exodus we find the express prohibition of God against the practice of idol-worship; Ye shall not make to your selves gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. And again in the same chapter; Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing.

§. 60. Thus we read in Isaiah the doom of those who said, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die: Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die. And thus it is written of the children of Israel to their reproach; That they sate to eat and drink, and rose up to play. And in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we better, neither if we eat not are we the worse. Again in the same epistle; When ye come together to eat, tarry one for another, and if any man hunger let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation. And in that to the Romans; The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And finally in St. John's gospel; I have meat to eat, which ye know not of; my meat is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work.

§. 61. He that loveth silver (saith the wise man) shall not be satisfied with silver. And in the book of Proverbs we read of him who withholdeth the corn, that

Against the love of money. *Issue of the struggle.* So I have here ventured to translate our author's word *contentionem*; as a little afterwards I have rendered the same word *conflict*. What bishop Fell hath conjectured of our author and Tertullian (who both use the same expression) is very probable, viz. That instead of *victoria*, they read it *victoria*, which signifies *contention*. Nor is the *victory* gained in this case without a good deal of *contention*, *struggle*, and *conflict*. In my construction I have endeavoured to take in both, and to reach, as far as I could, our author's meaning. *O Death.* We read it, O Grave. But several MSS. read it twice O Death, and our author plainly read it so. *May they.* What is here by our author and by the LXX expressed optatively, is read by us indicatively; instead of *may they be*, we render it, *they are*; tho' both the Hebrew and the Chaldean paraphrast favour the optative construction.

the people shall curse him; but that blessing shall be upon the head of him who selleth it. And the prophet Isaiah hath denounced; *Woe unto them who join house to house, and lay field to field, ° to deprive their neighbour of his property. What, would ye live alone upon the earth?* Thus also the prophet Zephaniah hath foretold to the men of this disposition; *They shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink the wine thereof; for the day of the Lord is near.* And St. Luke hath represented our Lord thus expositulating; *What is a man advantaged, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?* And again; *The Lord said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Yet farther; *Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things. But now your conditions are reversed, and he who was the beggar is supplicated, whilst you pine away in want.* Thus in the *Acts* we read of St. Peter saying; *Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give thee; In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.* And he took him by the right hand, and lift him up. And St. Paul thus writes in his 1st epistle to Timothy; *We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: Wherefore if we have food and rayment, let us be therewith content. But they who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: For the love of money is the root of all evil, which whilst some have coveted after, they have made shipwreck of their faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows.*

62. Thus we read of Tobit advising his son; *Take a wife of the seed of thy fathers, and take not a strange woman to wife, which is not of thy father's tribe.* And in *Genesis* we find Abraham sending his servant to get Rebecca of his kindred for his son to wife. And when the Jews had been in captivity, God was not (we find) appeased, till they had put away their strange wives, tho' by some of them they had children. And St. Paul hath given his opinion upon this matter in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians; *The wife (saith he) is bound by the law, as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.* And again; *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! What, know ye not, that he who is joined to an harlot, maketh one body with her? * for two shall be one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.* Once more in his 2^d epistle to the same Corinthians; *Be not ye yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what communion hath light with darkness? And finally, as a proof of the mischief cleaving to this practice, 'tis said of Solomon, That his strange wives turned away his heart after other Gods.*

° To deprive their neighbour of his property. *What, would ye live alone upon the earth?* So our author and the LXX; in words somewhat different from ours, which is the most literal construction, and runs thus; *Till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.* i. e. They would leave their neighbour no room for habitation, they would engross all, as if none were to dwell upon the earth but themselves; or as if it were made (all of it) for them, exclusive of others. So the sense is pretty much the same in some diversity of the rendering.

P He who was the beggar, &c.] *Hic rogatur;* so our author translates *παροικῶν* and I have rendered it according to his construction. We read it, *He is comforted.*

q Food.] *Exhibitionem;* the word is very common with Tertullian, wherever he speaks of our daily food de Idol. c. 6. 8. de Coron. Mil. c. 7. de Monogam. c. 16. And our author took it from him, or else from the usage of the law, where it was well known. Bishop Fell.

r Made shipwreck.] *Naufragaverunt, a fide.* The original hath it *ἀνίστασθαι* have erred, or been seduced.

s Entangled themselves.] *Inseruerunt se.* The original here hath it *ῥήξαι* pierced themselves; but I follow our author in my translation.

A. D. 249. §. 63. St. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians hath thus set it forth; Every sin which a man doth is without the body; but he who committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body. Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a great price. Therefore glorify God, and bear him in your body.

1 Cor. 6. 18, 19, 20. §. 64. Thus St. Paul hath written upon the subject; The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things which ye would. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like; of the which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, chastity. And they who are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with it's affections and lusts.

Galat. 5. 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. §. 65. Thus we read in St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians; Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor defrauders, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God; and such were you: But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

§. 66. Thus we read in the prophet Jeremiah; I will give them pastors according to mine heart, who shall feed my sheep with a proper discipline. And in the book of Proverbs; My son despise not thou the discipline of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. And in the ii^d psalm thus; * Preserve discipline, lest the Lord be angry, and so ye perish from the right way; when his wrath is on the sudden kindled: Blessed (then) are they who put their trust in him. And again in the xlixth (alias Ist) psalm; Unto the wicked God saith; What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest discipline, and hast cast my words behind thee? And in the wisdom of Solomon; Whoso despiseth discipline is miserable.

Wisd. 3. 11. §. 67. Thus St. Paul hath written to Timothy in his ii^d epistle; The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and scratching them. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables.

2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. §. 68. Thus St. Paul hath directed the Thessalonians; Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother who walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. And in the xlixth (alias Ist) psalm, we thus read; When thou sawest a thief thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.

§. 69. Thus St. Paul hath declared to the Corinthians, in his former epistle to them; Christ hath sent me to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect; for the preaching of the

* Bear him.] See §. 11. of this book, where our author reads it as here.
 † Chastity.] Some MSS. still read after *conjugem agere*. and our author by adding Chastity after Temperance, seems to have followed some of them.

‡ Extortioners.] Some MSS. of our author read *rapaces*, others *raptores*. The former will consist with our English version, the latter must have another meaning, and refer to persons guilty of Rapes.

§ Preserve discipline.] *Continere disciplinam*. *Deputanda mandata*. Bp. Fell conjectures, that the reading of the LXX might originally be *deputanda mandata*. *Amplexamini filium*, which would at once reconcile the diversity between that of the LXX and our common version, which is literally taken from the Hebrew. N. B. The vulgar Latin reads it with our author.

¶ On the sudden.] *Cito*, faith our author from the LXX's, *co raxo*: when he groweth a little angry, is the sense of the Hebrew, and of the Chaldean paraphrast.

‡ And scratching them.] *Prurientes in audiendo*, *scalpentes aures*. One of these expressions seems to have crept out of the margin into the text. (Bp. Fell)

- A. D. 249.
§. 77. That sinners are to be publicly rebuked. 1 Tim. 5. 20.
§. 78. That we must have nothing to do with heretics. Tit. 3. 10, 11.
1 John 2. 19.
§. 79. That a clean heart may ask any thing of God, in a full confidence of success. 1 John 3. 21, 22.
Matt. 5. 8.
Psalm 24. 3, 4.
§. 80. That the devil hath no power over man, but by permission from God. John 19. 11.
1 Kings 11. 14, and 23.
Job 2. 6.
John 13. 27.
Prov. 21. 1.
§. 81. That the hireling should readily be paid his wages. Leviticus 19. 13.
§. 82. Against sooth-saying and augury. Deut. 18. 10.
§. 83. Against the use of tused hair. Lev. 19. 27.
§. 84. Against thinning the hair of the beard. Leviticus 19. 32.
§. 86. That separation is utterly criminal, *nequeque confringere*. What follows in the next §. against thinning the beard, is of the same nature, and was appointed for the same reason. (Bishop Fell.) But how our author came to insert these prohibitions in a collection of precepts designed for the use of a christian, is no otherwise to be accounted for, than as he might level it in general against effeminacy and too great nicety.
Proverbial saying.] *Gratius* applieth this passage in the book of Ecclesiastes to them who move sedition, and create divisions in public bodies; and so understood it, with our author, as a proverbial saying.
If the head of his hatches flieeth off.] The LXX read this as our author doth; only in our present copies the words are differently pointed. For whereas our author joins *si exciderit ferrum* immediately, and without any point between them, to the foregoing words, *periculisabitur in eis*; in our present copies of the LXX there is a full point between the words *exciderit* and *ferrum*; and *in eis* inserted to signify. The Hebrew hath it, *if his hatches or his iron be blunted*.
77. And again in the verse next following that which was last cited, we read to this purpose; *Them who sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*
78. In the above-mentioned apostle's directions to Titus, we thus read; *A man who is an heretick after the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he who is such is perverted, and sinneth, and is condemned of himself.* Of such as these another apostle hath thus written; *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.*
79. Thus in the epistle last cited we find it written; *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God; and whatsoever we may ask, we shall receive of him.* And in the evangelist St. Matthew; *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* And in the xxiii^d (alias xxivth) psalm; *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? Even he who hath clean hands, and a pure heart.*
80. In the gospel of St. John we find our Lord saying unto Pilate; *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, unless it were given thee from above.* And it is written in the ist book of Kings; *That the Lord stirred up satan against Solomon.* And in the book of Job; *That satan had express permission from God, before he could attempt any thing against Job.* And after the devil had entered into Judas, we find a licence given to him in these words; *What thou doest, do quickly.* And in the book of Proverbs; *The king's heart is in the hand of God.*
81. Thus it was provided under the old law in favour of the hireling; *The wages of him who is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.*
82. We read these practices in the book of Deuteronomy prohibited; *Thou shalt not use any auguries, or divinations.*
83. Thus in the book of Leviticus we read, *That the Jews were forbidden to round the locks of the hairs of their head.*
84. It follows immediately in the place last quoted; *Neither shall ye mar the fashion of your beards.*
85. Thus we read again in the same book; *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man.*
86. In Solomon's book of Ecclesiastes, we read this^m proverbial saying; *He who cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby, if the head of his hatchet*

lieth off. And in the highest ceremonial of the Jewish worship, viz. That of eating the passover, the Israelites were expressly commanded, *To eat it in one house, and not to carry ought of the flesh abroad out of the house.* And in the cxxxiii^d (alias cxxxiii^d) psalm, its holy author expresseth, with some rapture, the excellencies of peace and good agreement; *Behold (saith he) how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* And our Saviour hath represented the mischiefs of disunion, where he telleth his disciples what St. Matthew hath reported of him in his gospel; *He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.* And St. Paul in his ist epistle to the Corinthians speaketh thus; *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms amongst you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.* And in the lxviiith (alias lxviiith) psalm; It is said to be God, who maketh men to be of one mind in an house.

87. So St. Matthew hath represented our Lord advising his disciples; *Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* And again; *Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

88. Thus St. Paul hath advised the Thessalonians in his ist epistle to them; *Let no man go beyond, nor defraud his brother in any matter; because the Lord is the avenger of all such.*

89. So St. Paul hath written in the epistle last cited; *The day of the Lord will so come, as a thief in the night. And when they shall say, Peace and safety, then shall sudden destruction come upon them.* And in the Acts of the Apostles we find a saying of our blessed Saviour to them recorded; *No one can know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

90. St. Paul in his ist epistle to the Corinthians hath directed in this matter as followeth; *To the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord; Let not the wife depart from her husband; but if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife.*

91. Thus the same apostle hath informed us in the same epistle; *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

92. Thus again we read in the forementioned epistle; *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

93. And again a little farther; *There must be heresies amongst you, that they which are approved may be made manifest amongst you.*

94. Thus we read in the book of Leviticus; *The soul which eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, which pertaineth unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.* And St. Paul in his epistle last cited writeth thus; *Whoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*

In one house.] As the passover was a type of the great christian sacrifice, the unity of action where-with the former was to be celebrated, doth not unfitly represent to us that unity of affections where-with the latter should be exhibited to God the Father.

maketh men of one mind.] So the LXX and our author; others render it, *Settleth the desires (the solitary) in families.*

Or drink.] Hence Pamelius would fain infer the no-necessity of communion in both kinds; and he might as justly have argued, that the church had power to have taken away the bread as well as the cup; since the one is as much at liberty as the other, if there be such force in the word *or*, as he would ascribe to it. Bishop Fell.

- A. D. 249.
§. 95.
That we should
chase to keep
company with
good men and
avoid the bad.
Prov. 24. 15.
Eccles. 9. 16.
Eccles. 6. 16.
Eccles. 9. 13.
Eccles. 25. 9.
Eccles. 28. 28.
Psalm. 118. 25.
20.
1 Cor. 15. 33.
95. In the book of Proverbs we read the following words; *Bring not the wicked into the dwelling of the righteous.* And in the same author's book of Ecclesiasticus thus; *Let just men be thy guests.* And again; *A faithful friend is the medicine of life and immortality.* Yet again; *Keep thee far from the man who hath power to kill, so shalt thou not doubt the fear of death.* And farther; *Well is he who hath found a true friend, and who speaketh* righteous things in the ears of them who will hear.* Once more in the same author we read this advice; *Hedge in thine ears with thorns, and hearken not to a perverse tongue.* Thus likewise in the xviith (alias xviiith) psalm; *With the merciful man thou wilt shew thy self merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thy self upright, and with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward.* And in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; *Evil communications corrupt good manners.*
- §. 96.
That we must
labour not in
word but in
deed.
Eccles. 4. 29.
1 Cor. 4. 20.
Rom. 2. 13.
Mat. 5. 19.
Mat. 7. 24.
25. 26. 27.
96. In the book of Ecclesiasticus we read thus; *Be not hasty in thy tongue, and in thy deeds slack and remiss.* And in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; *The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.* And in that to the Romans; *For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.* And in St. Matthew's gospel; *Whosoever shall do and teach these things, (viz. the foregoing commandments) the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* And again in the same evangelist; *Whosoever beareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock: And every one who beareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the Sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.*
- §. 97.
That we should
make haste to
embrace the
christian faith,
and to receive
the seal of it;
viz. baptism.
Eccles. 5. 7.
97. Thus Solomon hath advised in his book of Ecclesiasticus; *Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall the wrath of God come forth.*
- §. 98.
That catechu-
mens should
not indulge
themselves in
sin.
Rom. 3. 8.
98. We read a common saying condemned in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans; *Let us do evil till good comes, whose damnation is just.*
- §. 99.
That the rule
of God's judg-
ment would
be different to
those under
different dis-
positions.
Rom. 2. 12.
99. Thus we find it written in the forementioned epistle; *As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.*
- §. 100.
That the grace
of God ought
to be free, and
to be had with-
out price.
Acts 8. 20.
100. In the Acts of the apostles St. Peter's rebuke of Simon Magus is very observable to our present purpose; *Thy money (saith Peter) perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.* And our Saviour's words to his apostles are hereunto agreeable, as they stand
- Bring not. Ma wegaynes.]* So the LXX and our author; but our English version reads it, *Lay not* wair, *O wicked man, for the dwelling of the righteous;* herein following more literally the sense of the Hebrew, but the Arabic version favours our author's meaning.
And immortality.] These words are wanting in our present copies.
A true friend.] The LXX now read it *οφειλον* Prudente, as we truly render it; but our au-
thor's copies (it should seem from his version, *amicum verum*) read it *φίλον* Friend. * Righteous things,
or righteousness (*justitiam*) is also wanting in our present copies.
Hedge in.] This citation is not in the LXX, nor have it we in our English version; but the Arabic
version and vulgar Latin have it. See what was observed upon objections made to this book from such
passages in the prefatory note to it.
Till good comes.] Our present copies read it, *that good may come;* our author hath it *dum*,
and therefore the copies which he used should seem to have read it *in*, *dum* or *donec*, instead of
our present reading. (Bp. Fell.) N. B. Our author in this, and the foregoing citation, is not to
be understood, as supposing that either Solomon in the former, or St. Paul in the latter, had an im-
mediate respect to the case of baptism or of catechumens; but we are to consider him only as apply-
ing the general caution given by Solomon against delays in matters of religion, to the case of the
christian religion in particular; and so for the censure passed upon such as *did evil till good should come*,
we are to make the same construction; the censure of St. Paul was general, and our author applies it
to the particular case of catechumens, who, 'tis very likely, might presume upon the liberty of indul-
gence to their sins, from the current persuasion then obtaining, that baptism washed away all preceding
guilt, and began a new account.

recorded by St. Matthew; *Freely ye have received, freely give.* So likewise is that reproof of his to the money-changers reported by St. John; **Ye have made my father's house an house of merchandise.* And in the prophet Isaiah there is the following exhortation to the people of the Jews; *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and ye that have no money, come ye, buy and drink, without money.* And in the book of Revelations it is written to the same purpose; *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I will give unto him who is athirst of the waters of life freely: He that overcometh shall inherit these things with their inheritance, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

101. Thus we read in the book of Exodus; That, *Mount Sinai was altogether on a smook, because the Lord descended upon it.* And in the Acts of the apostles; That, *Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, which sate upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* And in the first book of Kings we may observe, that when God accepted the sacrifice, the *fire of the Lord fell and consumed it.* And in the book of Exodus we read of the *angel of the Lord appearing in a flame of fire out of the bush.*

102. Thus we read in the book of Proverbs; *He that reproveth a wicked man shall be hated of him, but rebuke a wise man and he will love thee.*

103. Observe what is written to this purpose in the forementioned book; *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

104. And again in the same book we have the following observation; *That Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.*

105. Thus again the same wise author hath reminded us; *He that spareth his rod, hateth his son.* And elsewhere; **Desist not from chastising thy son.*

106. Say not thou *I will recompence evil, but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee.* And elsewhere we find it written; *To me belongeth vengeance, I will recompence it, saith the Lord.* And in the prophet Zephaniah; *Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, in the day wherein I will rise up again to bear my testimony; for my determination is to assemble the nations, to gather their Kings, and to pour upon them my fierce anger.*

107. Thus Solomon in his book of Proverbs hath cautioned us; *Not to love detraction, lest it prove fatal to us.* And in the xlixth (alias 1th) psalm, we find it represented in a reproachful character; *To sit and speak against one's brother, or to slander one's own mother's son.* And St. Paul in his epistle to Titus hath recommended it to us; *To speak evil of no man, and to be no brawlers.*

* *Ye have made.*] So some MSS. read it, *ye do make*, & *waiters* in the way of reproof, instead of *Me waiters* do not make. Our author's copies seem to have read it in the former way, he translating it by *scistis*, *ye have made*.

† *These things.*] See note on §. 6. of the 2^d book of testimonies.

‡ *The Lord.*] The person descending is here supposed to be the 3^d person in the blessed Trinity, or else the citation it nothing to the purpose; yet usually the 2^d is understood, by the *Antis-nicene* fathers, to be the person immediately concerned in all the transactions of God with his church and people, before the coming of Christ in the flesh.

§ *Desist not.*] *Nō desisteris*, so it will bear to be translated: *Do it often*, if there be occasion. Others would have it, *nō desperes*, *despair not of him*, give him not up when he offends, as desperate, since correction will probably reclaim him. The Hebrew represents the sense to be, *chastise thy son because there is hope*; i. e. there will be hope of him if you chastise him.

¶ *Rise up again, &c.*] *In die resurrectionis mee in testimonium*, saith our author following the LXX; *In die resurrectionis mee in futurum*, saith our vulgar Latin. The meaning of all is, *in pradam*, or *spolium*, as the Hebrew; some day of remarkable judgment, wherein God would bear testimony to his justice, by some authentick proofs of it, and like a conqueror over his enemies, rise up to the spoil.

‡ *Not to love detraction.*] *Not to love sleep*, (saith the Hebrew) *lest thou come to poverty*, as we literally render it; but the word sleep is there equivocal, and will bear to be translated *repetition*, or *detraction*. (Bp. Fell.) The LXX read it as our author doth, and the vulgar Latin as we do in our English version.

- A. D. 249.
§. 108.
Not to lay
snare against
a neighbour.
Prov. 26. 27.
§. 109.
That the sick
are to be visi-
ted.
Eccles. 7. 35.
Matt. 25. 36.
§. 110.
That whisper-
ers are to be
held accursed.
Eccles. 28. 13.
§. 111.
That the sa-
crifices of the
wicked are
unacceptable
to God.
Eccles. 34. 19.
§. 112.
That the
powers of the
world shall
fare most
hardly in the
judgment of
God.
Wisd. 6. 5. 6.
Psal. 2. 10.
§. 113.
That we
should protect
the orphan,
and the wi-
dow.
Eccles. 4. 10.
Exod. 22. 22.
23. 24.
Isai. 1. 17. 18.
Job 29. 12.
33.
Psal. 68. 5.
§. 114.
That we
should reprove,
whilst we are
on this side of
the grave.
Psal. 6. 5.
Psal. 30. 10.
Ezek. 33. 11.
Jer. 8. 4.
§. 115.
Against flatter-
ing men in
their sins.
Isai. 3. 12.
§. 116.
That they who
have most sins
forgiven them
as their hap-
piness, love God
most.
108. Thus Solomon hath wisely foretold to us; That *whosoever diggeth a pit for his neighbour, shall fall therein himself.*
109. Thus the same wise author hath again advised us in his book of Ecclesiasticus; *Be not slow (saith he) to visit the sick, for that shall make thee to be beloved.* And St. Matthew hath recorded our Saviour's commendations of this practice; *I was sick, (saith our blessed Lord) and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*
110. Thus Solomon in his book last quoted hath written; *Curse the whisperer and double-tongued, for such have given great disturbance to many who were at peace.*
111. And again in the same; *The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the wicked.*
112. Thus the forementioned author hath written in his book of Wisdom; *A sharp judgment shall be to them who are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.* And in the 11th psalm we read thus; *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye judges of the earth.*
113. Thus we find Solomon advising in his book of Ecclesiasticus; *Be as a father unto the fatherless, and instead of an husband unto their mother; so shalt thou be as the son of the Most High, if thou wilt be obedient.* And in the book of Exodus we read of God's menaces to such as shall oppress them; *Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child; if thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.* And in the prophet Isaiah we have the following direction; *Judge for the fatherless, defend the widow; come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.* And Job congratulated to himself his own practice on these occasions; *I delivered (saith he) the poor out of the hand of the oppressor, and the fatherless who had none to help him; I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.* And in the 107th psalm, God himself is styled, *A Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows.*
114. In the 6th psalm, we find this question put; *Who shall confess unto thee in the grave?* And again; *Shall the dust confess unto thee?* Thus again the prophet exhorts us to repentance, where God by his mouth declares, *That he would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wicked way, and repent.* And in the prophet Jeremiah there is this expostulation from God with the wicked; *Will he fall, and not arise? Will he earn away, and not return?*
115. Thus we read in Isaiah; *O my people, they who pronounce thee happy, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*
116. This was our blessed Lord's observation in St. Luke's gospel; *To whom more is forgiven, the same will love more; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*

That they who have most sins forgiven them as their happiness, love God most. [Gravins judicari; this can be for no other reason, than because they have the greatest account to give. Indeed in our author's time there lay a particular circumstance against them; viz. Their enmity to the interests of the gospel.]

114. In the 6th psalm, we find this question put; Who shall confess unto thee in the grave? And again; Shall the dust confess unto thee? Either these words are redundant in our author; or else instead of *confess*, which are the words next following, he must have read, *si agnoscant* or somewhat like it. Bishop Fell.

115. Thus we read in Isaiah; O my people, they who pronounce thee happy, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. [Confessere unde dicitur?] *Ephesayes*; we render it, *give thanks*; the meaning is, *Glorify thee by any act of worship.* But our author followed the LXX, who read it, *confess*. Now confession was an act which so constantly attended all solemn repentance in the primitive church, that the whole office frequently took its denomination from that single usage. And thus Tertullian defined *exomologesis*, or confession, to be *prostratio & humilitatis hominis disciplina*; i. e. The whole discipline used in repentance. So the parr in this case denominated the whole. But then to plead from the word confession to the practice of *anctus confessio*, as it now obtains in the Roman church, hath the face either of great ignorance, or of great presumption.

116. This was our blessed Lord's observation in St. Luke's gospel; To whom more is forgiven, the same will love more; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. [Prostratio unde dicitur?] So the LXX and our author. The Hebrew will indifferently signify *dirigo*, or *beneficio*. Wherefore we take the liberty to render it, *lead thee.*

A. D. 148.



Of the HABIT of VIRGINS.

The book of the Habit of Virgins was written, in all likelihood, about the latter end of this year, either just before, or just after, our author's entrance upon the episcopal dignity; to restrain the license which then had prevailed in the practice and manners of women: And looks indeed like the first act of his new authority, to which he was this year admitted; although the right reverend Editor of his works is more inclined to ascribe this tract to him whilst he was yet a presbyter. His extreme caution is well enough to be accounted for, where he seems to disclaim authority, by the consideration of his being newly admitted to it, and that somewhat early, and out of the course of ordinary custom; it hath all of it the air of a person not thoroughly settled in the possession of his power, and yet attempting to exercise some parts of it: So that if it were lawful for me to interpose between two such great men, as our right reverend Editor, and Annalist, I should incline to the latter's opinion, who places this work in the frontispiece of those written by our author after his admission to the episcopate.

The end of
the discipline.



DISCIPLINE, the guardian of our hope, the anchor of our faith, our guide in the way to heaven, the fosterer of each good disposition, and the teacher of every virtue, causeth us to abide in Christ, to live always unto God, and leadeth us finally to the attainment of his precious promises. Wherefore to keep within the bounds

Psal. 11, 12.

Psal. 50, 16, 17.

Wisd. 3, 11.

Prov. 3, 11, 12.

prescribed by it, must needs be conducive to our greatest advantages, as to flight it must prove for the same reason destructive to them. In the 2^d psalm the Spirit of God hath directed us to *preserve discipline, lest we incur the displeasure of the Lord, and so perish from the right way, when his wrath ariseth suddenly against us.* And again, we may observe his expostulation with the wicked, to whom he saith, *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, and to what purpose dost thou take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest discipline, and castest my words behind thee?* Once more we read in the Wisdom of Solomon; *Who despiseth discipline is miserable.* And in another work of the same wise author, where he is professedly laying down certain approved maxims of wisdom, we find him expressing himself to the following purpose; *My son, despise not thou the discipline of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction; for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth.* Now if God correcteth those whom he loveth, and correcteth in order to reform them;

Discipline was the great matter to our author, whom he much admired, and was used to make some part or other of his works his daily study. Now Tertullian had written a book, entitled, *De virginibus velandis*; in imitation of which our author wrote this *Habit of Virgins*. See what hath been observed upon the quotation in 1. 66. of the 34 book of Testimonies. *Discipline*, say the LXX, which may indifferently be translated, *discipline*, with our author, or *instruction*, as our Bible renders it; or *nurture*, as in the following quotation from the book of Wisdom; or *chastening*, as in the passage, which he next refers to from the book of Proverbs, where the LXX all along use the word *maiden*.

why

why should not brotherly reproof, and especially sacerdotal admonition, pass alike for an argument of our love to those whom we so admonish or reprove? Especially since God hath foretold by the mouth of his prophet *Jeremiah*, with a particular eye of regard to the times of christianity; that he would give us *pastors according to his heart who should feed us with such^d discipline.* A. D. 248.
Jerem. 3. 15.

2. If then the holy scriptures do so abound in the recommendation of discipline to us; if the very foundation of our faith, and of our most holy religion, is laid in a certain godly fear and observance; what is there to be desired more ardently, or to be embraced more closely, than building up our selves on this solid bottom, or the fixing our root in this kindly soil; that so we may be enabled to stand firm against the storms and tempests of a boisterous world, and by observing the *precepts*, may at length obtain the *promises* of the gospel? Bearing always in mind, that our members are the temples of God, cleansed from all the dregs of their former corruption by the sacred laver of baptism; that therefore they should by no means be unhallowed or profaned, since he who offers the violence, doth in this case *suffer* it. We are here our selves the worshippers; nay, the priests of these temples. Him then let us serve to whom already we have been solemnly devoted. *St. Paul* in his epistles, wherein he hath trained us up to the christian life, according to the word of God, hath told us, that *we are not our own, but are bought with a great price; and should therefore glorify God, and bear him in our bodies.* Let us then glorify God (according to the apostle's advice) and *bear him in pure and clean bodies*, and with a more exact observance than we have hitherto done: Let us, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ our Lord, obey the commands of our redeemer in all the instances of duty which we can possibly pay to him; and let us use our best endeavours, that nothing impure or un sanctified be permitted to enter into the temple of God, lest our offences should provoke him to forsake his habitation. Those words of our blessed Lord to the impotent man in the gospel, plainly spoke his desire to save and teach, to cure and to admonish him together: *Behold thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* He labours (we see) to tincture the man's whole life and conversation with the fear of God, and prescribes to him the law of obedience at the same time whereat he restores his health; so that he is far from indulging a lawless liberty, but quite on the contrary, he lays the man under new and fresh obligations from the circumstance of his cure; it being indeed less criminal to offend against the restraints of religion, before you are acquainted with it; as the guilt is infinitely less pardonable which is contracted after your knowledge of God, and of his blessed will: And this is a matter which well deserves the care of men and women, of both sexes, and of all ages in them, as they have any regard for God, or for religion; that the state of holiness into which the grace and mercies of God have admitted them, be not lost or forfeited, through their neglect in preserving it. Inasmuch as we find it written; *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.* §. 2.
The more & special advantages of that branch of discipline which preserves the chastity of christians.
1 Cor. 3. 17.
1 Cor. 6. 19.
John 5. 14.
Matt. 10. 22.
§. 3.
That this care is more particularly incumbent upon virgins.

3. This general discourse of discipline will henceforwards be applied more particularly to the case of *virgins*; to whom as the larger proportion of *praise*

^d Discipline.] The LXX read it *μετ' ἐπιστάσεως* with knowledge or prudence; and so we translate it, with knowledge and understanding. Whether our author had copies which read it otherwise, or whether he took the liberty of supposing that discipline must of necessity make a part of the pastoral office, if really exercised with knowledge and understanding, I cannot absolutely determine; *ἐπιστάσεως* would have been a word agreeable to either acceptation, but the *Hebrew* and all the ancient versions read it with the LXX.

^e Bear him.] That this is our author's, as it was *Tertullian's* constant reading of the place, hath been before observ'd in §. 11. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

^f Infinitely less pardonable.] Our author's words are more peremptory, *nullo sit vicio ultra delinquere*, which have been accounted for already in my note upon §. 28. of the 3^d book of Testimonies, to which I refer my reader.

^g Virgins.] Virgins and widows enter'd more particularly into the care of the church, as being more exposed and more defenceless than others. But that any should hence form a scheme of virgins under a vow of

A. D. 248.

*Matt. 19. 11,
12.*

continuing so, and resembling the present nunneries of the Roman church, is a crude unsupported fiction, which hath no where any countenance from truly primitive example. *Clement Alexandrinus* hath even ventured to give the preference to a married, before a single life. *Stromas. lib. 7.* γυναικας δ' τιμαιοσι εὐχαισιν ἄλλας τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ τοῦ ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἐν τοῖς μυστηρίοις παλαιαῖς καὶ διανοήσις βίαις, ἀλλ' οὐκ οὐκ ἀποστόλοις, οὐ γυναικας καὶ παρρησιασιν καὶ τῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐντολῇ ἐντολῇ, &c.

than from any claims of power, &c.] Hence our right reverend Editor concludes our author not yet a bishop, because he would scarce, he thinks, have written in so submissive a strain if he had been actually invested with the episcopal authority: But with the greatest submission to the memory of our very learned Editor, *claims of power* could with no decency have been so much as *mentioned*, if there had been no pretence for making them. On the other hand, as he was chosen bishop somewhat out of rule and custom, there was reason enough for forming the first acts of his power, with all the tenderness wherewith he could guard them; and so he might very well thus express himself, when he wrote upon so nice a subject, and upon the case of persons who stood in such honourable esteem among the members of the church.

Devoted themselves.] *Se Christo dicaverint, & Deo voverint.* That there were virgins in the primitive church, who were under a stricter regimen than others, and professed an higher measure of sanctity than the common rate, is sufficiently attested by this tract of our author, if there were no other proof of it; and that these might properly enough be said to be *Christo dicata, Deo devota*, &c. without any necessity of their continuing to the end of their lives in such a state, is evident enough from the nature of the thing, and from the common import of the words. Wherefore as these words infer nothing of the usage which obtains at present in the Roman church, so neither is such usage supported by any history of facts, which can in any manner vouch it, to have had as yet a beginning. Our author in his 4th epistle hath put the case of such virgins as had been thus *dicata Christo*, and gives them liberty, nay advice, to marry, if they found they could not persevere in their profession; *Quod si ex fide se Christo dicaverunt, pudici & casti sine ulla fabula perseverent; ita fortes & stabiles premium virginittatis expectent, si autem perseverare noluunt, vel non possunt; melius est nubant, quam in ignem delictis suis cadant.* And St. Ignatius hath declared against forcing the yoke of virginity upon any, as a dangerous imposition; *Παρρησιας εχοντες μωρον ενισχυειν, ιεροδικας δε το γενησθαι & δουλοκρατους, & ιουδαιοι ιτανοισι ανδρες ενισχυει.* In fragments. *epist. ad Antioch. Græc. spicilic. cent. 2.* And again, *ibid.* *Τοις νεωριστοις ενισχυει γαμου, ωνεν αλλοι δουλοκρατοι ενισχυουσιν.* See moreover §. 14. of this very tract.

women,

women, for they are virgins: These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Nor let any one here suspect or argue, that men are only concerned in this representation, and that women are overlooked in it; for as woman is a part of man, and was taken and formed out of him, the oracles of God do generally therefore make special mention only of the protoplast, the sex which is first in the order of time and dignity; because indeed they two are but one flesh, and the woman is virtually implied, where the man is specified. A. D. 248.

4. Now if continence makes a particular profession of following Christ, and chastity hath chiefly the kingdom of God in its aim and prospect; what hath either to do with the delicacies of life, or with the ornaments and elegancies of dress and appearance? Wherewith whilst they study to please men, they do really offend God; forgetting all this while, how it is foretold of such as desire to be ^{Men-pleasers,} that they shall be put to confusion, because God hath despised them: And what a noble declaration was made by St. Paul in those words of his to the Galatians; *If I were desirous of pleasing men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* Now continence and chastity prescribe, not only to the purity of the flesh, but even to the decency and modesty of dress and ornament; that, according to what the apostle hath said of the unmarried woman, *she may be holy both in body and in spirit.* The same apostle hath observed, and told us in the place before mentioned, *That he who is unmarried careth for the things which belong unto the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he who is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife.* Thus likewise the virgin and the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. Now a virgin ought not only to be so indeed, but she should be so likewise in character and common estimation; there should be no suspicions of her integrity; no doubt entertained, whether she be in reality what she is in profession. Her character therefore should be uniform, and all of a piece, and should suffer no diminution from any undue sollicitude about her dress: for what hath she to do to appear in publick, setting off her person with the advantages of elegance and art, as if she had an husband to please, or were trying to get one? She should rather be afraid of engaging any man's affections, if she be indeed a virgin, and designs to continue so; nor should she endanger her own person, who professeth to reserve it for nobler and more heavenly uses. They then who have no husbands whom they can pretend to please by the goodness of their appearance, should by all means be exhorted to continue holy and unblemished, not only in their bodies, but in their spirits too, even in the innermost thoughts and purposes of their hearts. It is quite out of character for a virgin to be setting her hair to a glass, to admire her own beauty in it, to glory in the comeliness of her shape or features, or in any outward advantages of the flesh; since her great struggle is indeed with the flesh, and the only victory she aims at, is over her own body. St. Paul we may observe proclaiming strenuously with a God forbid! *that he should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world was crucified unto him, and he unto the world.* And shall a virgin then, within the care of the church, take upon her to glory in the fading flower of fleshly beauty? The same apostle, we may take notice, hath proceeded farther, and told us, *That they who are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* Now shall she, who professeth to have renounced the sinful lusts of the flesh, be found tardy in those very articles? In very deed your pretensions and your practices have an inconsistent appearance; you profess one thing and yet seem inclinable to another; you chuse to contract some of the blemishes sticking upon lust and evil concupiscence, whilst yet you stand candi-

§. 4.
That continence is scarce consistent with delicacy of dress and habit.

Psal. 53. 5.

Galat. 1. 10.

1 Cor. 7. 34.

Ibid. 8. 32.

33.

34.

Galat. 6. 14.

Galat. 5. 24.

¹ Men-pleasers.] See what was observed upon this citation in §. 55. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.
² The virgin.] See what was observed upon this citation in note on §. 32. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

A. D. 448. date for the honour of an unblemished chastity. Cry, saith God to his prophet *Isaiah*: *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and its flower fadeth, but the word of our God abideth for ever.* It is not decent for a christian, much less for a virgin, to lay any stress upon the beauty of the flesh, or the comeliness of her person; but to esteem the word of God above all things, and to value those advantages, which, like *that*, will *abide for ever*. Or if any glorying in the flesh can become a christian, it is *then*, when it is firm enough to endure torments for the sake of Christ, and for the acknowledgment of his religion; when even *female* weakness is enabled to tire out the strength and patience of *masculine* tormentors; when it can stand the test of fire, and sword, and racks, and the fury of wild beasts, in the way to its desired crown of martyrdom. Wounds and scars *thus* got, are the truest ornaments of the flesh, and better far than the most costly necklaces or bracelets.

5. 5.
That there is
no excuse for
delicacy from
any affluence
of fortune or
riches.

5. Some there are who would fain derive their excuse from a plentiful fortune, and would argue thence that they ought to be allowed the use of it; but let such consider, that she only is truly rich, who is rich towards God, and Christ; and that there is nothing which indeed deserves the name of good, but what is of a spiritual, divine, and heavenly nature; what will lead us to God, and there abide with us for ever, without change or diminution. Whatever then the world accounts of as most esteemable, must (all of it) be left behind us, when we leave the world; and should therefore be as despicable to us as the world it self, whose pomps and delicacies we solemnly renounced, when we came over from it into the service of God. The holy apostle St. *John* hath

1 John 2. 15.

given us heavenly counsel in that divine exhortation; *Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for all which is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he who doth the will of God abideth for ever, even as God himself abideth for ever.* Wherefore we should by all means labour after the attainment of spiritual advantages, and in order thereunto, should make the will of God the rule of our lives and actions; and in so doing we shall follow both the

John 6. 38.

example and direction of Christ our Lord, who hath told us of himself, that *he came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him*. So that if the servant be not greater than the master, and if the redeemed owe all possible reverence to their redeemer, we, who would be thought christians, should surely copy after the pattern set us by Christ our master and redeemer. It is written for our instruction, and we hear it read in the

1 John 2. 6.

church for our example; *He who saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.* We must endeavour therefore to walk with equal paces to his, and to follow his practice with an holy emulation; to resemble it as nearly as possibly we can; and when our practice makes such near approaches to our profession, when we not only believe the gospel, but live as becomes it, then, and only then, we may expect the reward of our faith and of our obedience together. You urge your wealth and your abun-

2. 2. 2. This must certainly refer to the solemn renunciations used at baptism; where St. Basil and Origen make mention. Thus Basilian. We judiciously renounce the devil, his pomp and array. De Cos. Mil. c. 3. And again, When upon our entrance into the water, we make a confession of the christian faith, in the words which our rule (i. e. our creed) prescribes to us, we profess that we have renounced the devil, his pomp and array, (118. de Spectac. c. 12.) And Origen (Hom. 12. in Numb. c. 12.) thus relates the words of the faithful novitiate, when he first approached the waters of baptism, what words he then used, and what he told the devil he must expect from him, viz. That he would never more resort to his pomps, nor to any of his works; that he would not obey any of his servants; nor inflame himself to his pleasures. Are not these notable renunciations given to persons in the office of divine worship? See farther 5. 4. of epistle 60. and 5. 2. of epistle 70. with what is noted thereupon.

A. Euseb. de God himself. So our author reads the text with this addition, tho' we have now no MSS. which read it as he did.

dance

dance in excuse of your conduct, but St. Paul is beforehand with you in his answer to your plea, and calls you to order, and moderation in your apparel, saying; *Let the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with plaited hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but as becometh women, whose good conversation speaks them chaste.* And St. Peter agrees with him in the same advice, where he saith; *Let the women's adorning be not so much that outward adorning of gold, or of fine apparel, but rather the purity and cleanness of the heart.* Now if these apostles advise a restraint to be laid upon women, by the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, who had the plea of pleasing their husbands by setting off their persons; how much more weighty is their exhortation in the case of virgins, who have no apology of that kind for their care of dress, no pretence of throwing off their fault from themselves upon another, but are entirely chargeable with the sum total of the guilt which is hence contracted? Yet still you are loth to depart from your plea of riches, and from the excuse you think they furnish, for your making a distinguished appearance. Now if we should grant that there is something in it; yet every thing which *may lawfully, cannot be done commendably*; nor should inclinations which spring out of the pride of life, be indulged without bounds or measure, or any regard to the decency and modesty of the virgin-state; especially when it is considered what St. Paul hath written, *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

6. If therefore you will needs adorn your person with sumptuous attire, and thence attract the observation of all who see you pass the Streets; if you will lay a bait for catching the eyes, and for drawing the sighs of our young men after you; if you will provide fuel for their lusts, and put in their way the occasions of sin; if with pretended safety to your self, you prove the destruction of others, and kill them as surely as poyson or sword would do it; why then, how demure soever your professions are, your mind is polluted, and you cannot be accounted guiltless: Your very dress is an argument against you, and its extravagance speaks your immodest purposes; you forfeit your rank amongst the daughters and virgins of Christ, when your manner of life betrays your great design to be upon the affections of our youth. You vain would plead your wealth in apology for your practice; but virgins surely should not boast of their fortune; and 'tis quite out of character for them to bear themselves high upon it, especially seeing the scriptures of God have thus spoken; *What hath pride profited us, or what good hath the vaunting of our riches brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow.* And the apostle hath advised them who buy, *to be as those who possess not; and them who use this world, as though they used it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away.* And the apostle St. Peter, to whom our blessed Lord committed the care of feeding his sheep, and upon whom he founded his church, declares, that as to *silver and gold he had none*; but then instead thereof he abounded in faith, and in the power of godliness, and through the grace of his master Christ he was enabled to do many mighty works, and was enrich'd with a fulness of all spiritual gifts. Now she who prefers the riches of this world before the riches of Christ, must forfeit her title to these gifts and graces; wherefore if you are really so flowing, as you pretend, in worldly riches, and think your self privileged to use what God hath blessed you with, use them in God's name; but use them to good purposes, apply them to those ends of religion which God hath appointed for them. Let the necessitous and the poor be sensible of your abundance; put out your money to God, who will repay your loans with interest;

* The scriptures of God.] *Scriptura divina*; for my part I cannot but think from our author's manner of quoting this book of *Wisdom*, and from the title which he here and elsewhere gives it, that he believed it entitled to a divine original (See 5. 17. of the *Plague*); or however, that it stood with him in much higher degrees of esteem and veneration, than what are now allowed to it.

A. D. 248. feed your Redeemer with it in his destitute and hungry members; engage by it many solicitors to the throne of grace, that you may be enabled to persevere in your purpose of chastity, and qualified to partake of the recompence assigned to it. Recommend your treasure to that safe repository, where no thief nor robber can come at it to diminish it. Provide your self as amply as you will with possessions; but let them be of the heavenly sort; whose happy fruits no injuries of time nor weather can blast or corrupt. You even hence offend against God, if you think he gave you riches not to be used in a proper manner. Thus *e. g.* God hath given to man a voice to speak with; but he is not therefore at liberty to use it as he pleases, or to lavish it upon love-songs, or obscene conversation; he hath likewise entrusted man with the use of iron; but he may not therefore commit murder with it; frankincense, wine and fire, are also the gifts of God to man; but will any one be so perverse as to argue thence, that it is lawful for him to sacrifice to idols with them? Or because you have plenty of cattel in your fields, that therefore you may offer them in sacrifice after the manner of the heathen? Thus it is in the case of a great estate, if it be abused; it proves a temptation and a snare, when it is not made subservient to good ends and purposes; and when the possessor of it is not careful to *redeem* his offences, rather than to *increase* them with it.

S. 7.
That the al-
lurements of
dress and or-
nament are
marks of in-
continence.

Revel. 17. 1.

2. 3. 4.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

Isai. 3. 16, 17.

18, 19, 20, 21.

22, 23, 24.

7. All distinctions of dress, which are designed to recommend and to set off the person, are broad intimations of an immodest purpose; and it is accordingly observable, that none are usually more sumptuous in their appearances than such as are profligate in their character, and cheap in their persons. Thus in the holy scriptures, which were written for our instruction, we find the city, which was an harlot, set off with great elegance and delicacy of attire, and so perishing thro', and together with her, her gawdy finery. *And there came one of the seven angels (saith the holy author) which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore, who sitteth upon many waters, with whom the Kings of the earth have committed fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit. And I saw a woman sit upon a beast; and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications, throughout the whole earth. Wherefore let chaste and modest virgins avoid all appearances of the dissolute and incontinent. Let them not be seen in the same attire with such as frequent the brothels, and publick houses of debauchery and scandal. The Holy Spirit of God, by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, hath smartly reprehended the daughters of Sion, who lavished away their wealth upon a showy dress, and fell off from the service of God, thro' too much indulgence to the pomps of the world, and the pride of life; The daughters of Sion (saith he) are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, tripping nicely as they go along, and affectedly dragging their trains after them; wherefore the Lord shall bumble the chief daughters of Sion, and shall expose their nakedness, and shall take away the bravery of their ornaments, their curled locks, and their ear-jewels, and their bodkins, and their bracelets, and their*

Or they have much indulgence.] The measure of this over-much indulgence to the pomps of life, and the particulars wherein it consisted, are to be taken from the received decencies and customs of the time and place which our author wrote in. So that if he seems sometimes severe upon things, which we in this age account as innocent, we must apologize for him, by a regard to what was in his time esteemed as decent, or excessive. The general intent of his story is all we are concerned for, which may still be very fully pointed at all extravagance of dress, as quite out of character, and unbecoming Christians.

Curled locks, &c.] That our author should use words which we cannot exactly render in matters of dress, will be no wonder to any man, who considers the infinite variety which there is in different ages and countries; as to all things of this kind and nature. Wherefore I am not at all solicitous about giving my reader an exact translation of his *Lanula, Discriminalia, Boironatum, Dextralia, &c.* nor about adjusting his text with the words of the sacred writer. His general aim we cannot be mistaken in, which was exposing the excesses of the Popish and sinful

best

rings

rings, and their flowered silks and purple. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be a stink; and instead of a fine girdle, an halter; and instead of well-set hair, baldness. These are the things which God hath censured and found fault with, as corrupting the modesty of virgins, and drawing them off from their worship of the true God. Their exaltation of themselves was the thing which sunk them; their affectation and foppery in dress, were the circumstances which provoked the justice of God to expose them to disgrace: And indeed from a great solicitude to be cloathed with silk and purple, people become naturally the less concerned for putting on the Lord Jesus; and the more curious they are in ordering their bodies, the more negligent they grow as to the ornaments of their minds. Who then would not abhor and shun, what hath proved already destructive to others? Who would desire, or court, what hath been found as certainly fatal and ruinous as a sword, or spear, is to the man who dies by it? Were you to see a man expire immediately, upon eating of such a dish, or drinking of such a liquor, you would certainly conclude that there was poyson in it, which should kill so suddenly; nor would any persuasions prevail upon you to eat of that dish, or to drink of that liquor, which you should have so much reason to believe had proved fatal to those who had eat or drank of them just before you.

8. How ridiculous therefore is it to desire what hath always been, and always will be found, injurious to others, and yet to flatter your self that you shall, in particular, escape unhurt by it? God, we consider, made not sheep of a purple or a scarlet colour; nor was it from his instruction that we were taught to tincture our wooll with the juice of herbs or of fishes; nor did he form these ranges of pearl and precious stones, which make those necklaces wherewith the neck, which was truly of his forming, is in a manner covered and hid; and thus in truth his workmanship is made to disappear, in favour to an invention of Satan's, which is suffered to dangle over it. Can we think it the will of God, that the ears should be bored and wounded, and poor harmless infants, ignorant as yet of all worldly wickedness, be thereby tormented, only to make holes for the reception of weighty pendants; weighty, if not by their proper bulk, yet, by the price they cost to the lavish purchaser. All these mischievous inventions those wicked spirits introduced amongst us, who sinking into the dregs of worldly pollution, lost thereby the vigour of their heavenly state; and then instructed us, after their deceitful manner, in the arts of blackning our eye-brows, painting our faces, changing the colour of our hair, and, in short, of disguising every feature.

9. Upon this occasion, I cannot but think, that the regard which I profess to our most holy faith, and the good will which is due to my brethren, obliges me to admonish not virgins only, or widows, but even the whole female sex, whether married or unmarried; that no art should be used, no colours laid on to disguise the native features and complexion of an human countenance. We read of God's saying, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*; and shall any one dare afterwards to attempt a change of it? They offer violence, as it were, to God himself, who go about to improve upon his performances;

A. D. 248.

§. 8.

That such over-laboured care of dress, disguises the work of God.

§. 9.

And thereby provoketh his anger.

Genes. 1. 26.

* Fishes.] The *conchile* or *conchylum* was a shell-fish, which produced the purple dye. [Who sinking, &c.] Our author was not singular in this opinion of the angels fall thro' lust; but his master *Tertullian* entertained it before him, as did *Lactantius*, l. 2. c. 15. and the great *Eusebius* after him, de prep. lib. 5. Thus *Tertullian* de cultu feminar. cap. 10. Per angelos autem peccatores demonstrata sunt qui & ipsas materias prodiderunt, & operositas cum raritate commissa pretiositate, ex ea libidine possidenda pretiositatis faminarum. Nor is it wonderful that these fathers should be of this opinion, since the same is contained in the book of *Enoch*, for whose authority (whatever modern criticism may have determined against it) *Tertullian* hath appeared with some solicitude and warmth, and hath endeavoured to account for the Jews rejecting it, because of the testimony it bore to Christ; and as to its perishing in *Noah's* flood, he observes, that the contents of it might easily have been retained, and retrieved, by *Noah*; but what in his account put the authority of this book beyond all dispute, was the citation which he supposed taken out of it, and the appeal made to it by *St. Jude*, x. 14. *Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, &c.* See *Tertull. de Habit. Mulieb.* c. 3. vindicating this book of *Enoch*.

A. D. 248. and to alter the figure of his workmanship; not considering that every creature, as it is born into the world, is *his* work, and that whatever is different from its primitive make, is the devil's. Suppose a painter, eminent for a distinguished skill in his profession, should draw any one's picture to the life, and after *he* had finished it *another* should step in, should alter some lines in the finished piece, and as a forward critick, censuring the former performance, should pretend to mend it; certainly the real artist would have the highest reason to resent the affront, and to look upon this usage as the greatest indignity; and can you then imagine, that God is less an artist in his works, than the most skilful painter, or will less resent the indignity of an abuse being offered them? For argument's sake we will allow you not to be injurious to men, nor incontinent in your own person, by your dawbing and your colouring; but you are notwithstanding chargeable with adulterating and abusing the workmanship of God, which is an offence not less heinous than the other. What you only call adorning and setting off your person, is really a cheat and counterfeit practice, and a violation besides of God's handy work. An inspired writer hath
 1 Cor. 5. 7. 8. exhorted us to *purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump, as we are unleavened; for that even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us, therefore we should keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* But now what regard is there paid to the law of sincerity and truth, when the truth of things is vitiated by false colours, and disguised representations? Your Lord and master hath told you, that, That *you cannot make one hair white or black*; but you will needs confute his assertion, and prove your self capable of doing what he hath pronounced impracticable. You presumptuously adventure to dye your hair, and with a very ill omen to your future condition, you labour to make it flame-coloured: Thus your head, (the best part of your body) is made the instrument of your sin, which is the greater shame to you. It is written of our blessed Saviour, That *his head and his hairs were white like wool or snow*; but you (forsooth) are too delicate to approve a colour which bears so near a resemblance to that of our Lord and master. I wonder you are not afraid, that the great divine artist who made and fashioned you, should refuse to acknowledge you at the "general resurrection; and reject you from the hope of his promises, with the sarcasm of a satyrists, and the censure of a judge, in some such manner as this which follows: "This
 "is none of my workmanship, nor my image; you have quite altered the
 "countenance which I made for you; nor hair, nor face, nor features, are
 "the same: You cannot therefore see God with those eyes which God did
 "not make, but which the devil hath new coloured. Him indeed you have
 "followed, and have took for your pattern the red and fiery eyes of the serpent, and since you have taken your dress from him, you may e'en take
 "up your abode with him, and dwell together in eternal fire." Are not these apprehensions very fit to be entertained by the servants of God, and ought they not to think on them continually with fear and trembling? Let the married woman flatter herself (if she thinks good) with the excuse of pleasing her Husband, and let her take the consequence, if, instead of deriving from him her own apology, she be found to involve him in a participation of her guilt; but certainly I should never rank those in the class of virgins (and to *virgins* my present discourse is principally directed) who should labour the point of dress and ornament by such arts as these; rather like infected sheep I should incline

* *You cannot make, &c.*] Tertullian had argued just thus in his book *de cultu feminar.* c. 6. *Sed enim dominus ait, quis vestrum potest capillum atrum ex albo facere, aut album ex atro? Haec quæ revivunt Deum: Ecce inquit, pro albo vel atro flavum facimus, &c.* Pamel. Edit.

* *Flame-coloured.*] So Tertullian in the place just cited, *Male ac pessum sibi auspicantur flammeos capite.* Bp. Fell.

* *General resurrection.*] So the abovenamed Tertullian in the book just cited, and in the 7th chapter, *Atque utinam miserrimus ego in illo die christiana exaltationis vel inter calcanea vestra caput oleum, videre an cum cinis & purpuris & croco & in illo ambitu capitis resurgatis.*

to separate them from the pure unpolluted flock of virgins, lest by feeding in the same pasture they should taint the rest, involve them in a like fate with themselves, and draw them in for a share of their own destruction. A. D. 241.

10. Now by the same rule and reason whereupon we are looking after the advantages of continence, we should avoid whatever hath a tendency to prejudice or hurt it; and here I shall not omit the mention of divers usages which have crept into acceptance through mere neglect, and now against all the rules of modesty and good manners, plead prescription for the continuance of what had its rise from encroachment and a lawless liberty. Thus some are not ashamed of being * present at marriage-entertainments, nor of joining in a libertine conversation, nor of taking their part in hearing and speaking, and observing what is every way improper for them; where filthy talk, and filthy company help to fire each other's lust, and to prepare the bride and bridegroom for the conclusion of their ill-managed solemnity. But what, I would ask her, hath she to do with marriage, who professeth a mind averse from it? Or what entertainment can she find in a place, where the bent and disposition of the company are quite different from her own? What is it which there she must hear and see? How inconsistent is it with her pretension, to carry chaste inclinations with her to a place, from which she is morally sure she shall not return with them? For however she may urge that her person comes off unpolluted, yet she hath seen, and heard, and spoken what must weaken her purposes, and let in upon her mind a set of impure ideas. And what then must be said of such as frequent promiscuous bathings, and expose thereby those bodies to the view of the lustful and incontinent, which are devoted to purity and chastity? How will they escape the censure of ministering fuel to the lusts and passions of those who desire to corrupt them, when themselves are seen naked, and when they look upon men who are so too? You will say perhaps, "Let every one for himself look to it, what views he comes with; for my part, I have no other design, but merely of refreshing my self and bathing." This defence will not serve your turn, nor acquit you of a lascivious and immodest purpose: Such bathing, depend on it, will never wash you clean; it will rather defile, than any way adorn you. You look, you say, on no one there with any immodest purpose; but if others gaze at you with immodest glances, you are still accountable. You take (*your self*) no misbecoming pleasure in any thing which your eyes are necessarily there entertained with; but then you furnish others with an improper satisfaction. And thus indeed you make the bath a very theater; nor is the theater it self so foul a sight as the place where you put off all regards of decency and modesty together with your cloaths, and expose your virgin body to the notice and observation of every one who baths with you. Consider now, I beseech you, whether you can henceforwards lay any claim to the character of modesty, or are likely to have it allowed you among the men hereafter, when you have made such advances already towards its contrary, by the boldness of accustoming your self to appear stark naked. Hence it comes to pass that the church of Christ so often laments the loss of her virgins, so often hears with grief the rumours which are spread abroad to the disadvantage of their reputation; hence indeed her virgins themselves too often are betrayed into a snare, whereby not only they (themselves) are sufferers, but all the honour, the glory, the dignity of their profession, sink and suffer with them. These are the arts by which the great enemy, the devil, forms his sly approaches, and at last obtains an entrance. Thus whilst our virgins will needs set off themselves with the utmost elegance.

* Present at marriage-entertainments. The liberties of the heathen world were here extraordinary, where obscene verses, and all sorts of impure conversation, were indulged to the utmost height; so that our author's censure was very pertinent to his times, and I wish it had been so peculiar to his times, that in ours there were no room for the application.

A. D. 248. cies of dress, and with *these* take *other* unbecoming liberties, the poyson works insensibly, and they lose their honour before they are aware of it; they become in a manner widows, before they are married; and elope from Christ, when they have no husband to elope from; and as, if they had kept their first love, the reward of their perseverance had been great beyond expression; such proportionably will be the punishment of their inconstancy in departing from it. Wherefore it is no less the interest than the duty of you virgins, to hearken to me as your parent, advising, instructing, forewarning you, and consulting in all points your real advantages. Be content then to be what the hand of God your Father hath made you: Let your face, your neck, your whole appearance, be undisguised and artless. And, to sum up the foregoing particulars, let not your ears be wounded for the sake of pendants; let not your arms nor your necks be laden with costly ranges of pearl, or bracelets, nor your feet be entangled with golden chains; let your hair remain in its native colour, and your eyes be fit for the seeing God. For baths, use none but with your own sex, which you may use with modesty; and as to all nuptial festivals, with the extravagant entertainments which so usually make a part of them, they should be entirely avoided, because it is so dangerous to come near them.

§. 11. That virginity is next in degree to martyrdom. 11. It is a shame for you, who profess virginity, and a stricter attendance than ordinary upon the service of God, to be caught with a temptation which hath so little to recommend it as dress and ornament; when you have proved your self superior to more engaging invitations, 'tis an unpardonable inconsistency to be vanquished by *less*. *Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life*; sublime and difficult is the passage to glory. Thro' this difficult and narrow tract, martyrs, virgins, and each just man who expects to be made perfect, steer their course. Wherefore I beseech you to strike out of the broad and frequented passages, since *there* are ruinous and destructive pleasures, wherewith the devil entices and flatters, in order to deceive and ruine you. The first increase which we read of in the gospel, is an *hundred fold*, and this indeed belongs to *martyrs*; but the next which is *sixty fold*, is yours. As therefore the martyr lays aside all thoughts of providing for the pomps and delicacies of life, and finds himself engaged in a difficult and laborious encounter; so, since your recompence is next to his in dignity and value, your fortitude in *enduring hardness* should rise in proportion to the hope of your reward. Great attainments cannot be reached without a good deal of difficulty and struggle; we are content to sweat and take pains in climbing up an high ascent; and shall we then complain of weariness in the labour which raiseth us to heaven? The more you have respect to your promised recompence, the lighter you will find your burden in fulfilling the conditions whereupon it is suspended. You should support your selves in the struggle by a comfortable remembrance, that life and immortality, and a crown of glory, are promised to your success in it. Wherefore to you, *virgins*, I address my self with a more especial exhortation, that you would *continue* what you *are*, that so you *may* be what you *hope* for. Great is the reward assigned to you, and the advantages of chastity are more than can be numbred.

§. 12. That virgins avoid the curse of Eve. 12. Would you be instructed more particularly from what evils your condition exempts you, or to what benefits it entitles you? Observe then what God once said to our common mother; *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy pains; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy resort and refuge shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*. But now you are entirely free from the effects of this sentence; you are in no apprehensions of the pains and sorrows which come upon women in their travail; you have no anxieties to perplex you concerning either the birth or educa-

[Resort and refuge.] See this passage quoted and explained in note on the 3^d book of Testimonies, §. 32.

tion of children; nor have you an husband to rule over you, but Christ alone A. D. 248.
is your Lord and Head.

13. Your condition gives you privileges equal to those of our sex. What §. 13.
our Lord hath spoken in the gospel is very observable; *The children of this* That they are
equal to men,
nay even to
angels.
world marry, and are given in marriage; but they who shall be accounted Luke 20. 34;
35, 36.
worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither
marry, nor are given in marriage; ² for they shall never dye, being equal
unto the angels, as being the children of the resurrection. You have there-
fore already entered upon the state; which we only hope to enter on; the
great privilege consequent upon a resurrection, you are now in possession of;
and thus you pass through the world without receiving any stains from it.
When you persevere in your purposes of chastity, you are plainly equal to
the angels of God; and have nothing more to do, but to go on as you have
begun, and to endure as you are unto the end. But then you will not seek
to derive any honours upon your character from the ornaments of dress, but
from the virtues of the mind, and from a simplicity of manners: You will
look up to God, and to those blessed mansions which he hath prepared for
you; you will judge it, as it really is, misbecoming your profession, to fix
your eyes or your affections upon the things of this world, when they have
been entertained with so much sublimer and nobler prospects. The ordinance
made for our first parents directed them indeed to *increase and multiply*; but Gen. i. 28.
we are now exhorted to continence and chastity, upon the foot of our new
economy. When the world was young and unpeopled, it was necessary
that it should receive an addition to its inhabitants, in the way of propaga-
tion; But now when it is sufficiently stored with numbers, they who are
able to receive the precept of continence, may *make themselves eunuchs for* Matt. 19. 12;
the kingdom of heaven's sake.

14. Yet is not this enjoined in peremptory terms, or made a matter of the §. 14.
least necessity; but is only recommended in the way of persuasion, and we Yet that this
is not peremp-
torily com-
manded, but
is left to hu-
mane pru-
dence and dis-
cretion.
still are left in it to our own choice and liberty. But as our Lord hath told us;
that in his father's house there are many mansions, he hath pointed to us
the best of them, which you profess to aim at; and you will doubtless arrive
at the greater measure of proficiency in all heavenly virtues, for curbing the
inclinations of your sinful flesh. Whoever cometh to God through his holy
ordinance of baptism, professeth indeed to put off the old man, to be regene-
rated ¹ through the grace attending it, to be renewed in his mind through the
sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God, and so to be cleansed entirely
from the pollution of his former sins. But then the grace which is conse-
quent upon this new birth, flows out upon you in the larger measures, for
having mortified to such a degree the desires of your fleshly lusts; and for
having retained no other inclinations, than such as have a virtuous and spiri-
tual tendency, and so lead to glory. They are the words of an apostle, whom
our Lord hath styled *a chosen vessel unto him,* and whom God sent express Acts 9. 15.
to deliver his pleasure to the world; *the first man is of the earth, earthy;* 1 Cor. 15. 47;
the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they who are 48, 49.
earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also who are heavenly; and
as we have born the image of the earthy, ^b let us also bear the image of the
heavenly. Now this image, which we are here directed to bear, is actually
born, by those who continue unblemished in a virgin state, and who live up
to that holiness which they make their profession; who are mindful of the
rules prescribed to them by God; who join to their religion all manner of
righteousness; who are true to their principles; who serve the Lord with re-

^a For they shall never dye.] *Neque enim incipient mori.* This is the reason why they do not marry;
the propagation of our kind being intended for the supplement of such as dye.

^b Through the grace, &c.] Regeneration, we see, is here supposed to go along with the ordinance,
and the Spirit of God is presumed to accompany it with his sanctifying grace.

^c Let us also bear.] See what is written in note on §. 11. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

A. D. 248. verence and a godly fear; who are able to endure hardness, and to bear with injuries; in short, who are ready to perform all acts of courtesy and kindness, with chearful hands and hearts, and who live in peace and unity one with another. These are the duties which in a most particular manner are incumbent upon you virgins, who reserving your selves for the more especial service of God and his blessed son, are entirely devoted to it, and are already entered upon the most valuable part of it. It only now remains, that I exhort the more aged amongst you, to be patterns to the younger, the younger to be assistant to the elder in all good offices, and to spur on their equals to a godly emulation; *all*, to excite and provoke each other to good works, by mutual examples and reciprocal persuasions. Persevere then in your profession with constancy and courage, make continual advances in all spiritual improvements, and you will doubtless reap in due time the fruits of your labour. I have only one farther request to you, before I conclude, which is to be *mindful of me* in that blessed hour, when your perseverance in chastity shall open you an entrance upon the reward assigned to it.

^c *Mindful of me.*] It is not absolutely certain whether our author desired these virgins to be mindful of him *after*, or just *before* their deaths. To the intercessions of martyrs, signified just *before* their departure, great regard, we know, was had in the primitive church; and penitents who got tickets from them *before* their decease, were on their account the sooner restored to the peace of the church. This was also the privilege of confessors: but indeed I see no great harm of admitting, that St. Cyprian did desire them to be mindful of him *after* their deaths; since when he made this request to them they were *living*; and if we may desire the prayers of good men, that they would intercede with God for us whilst they are *upon earth*, I see not why we should be restrained from desiring of them in their *life time*, that they would remember us also when they are in *heaven*, and so have a nearer admission to the throne of grace. Nor will it thence follow, that the *living* may pray to the *dead* for their intercession, because such prayer supposes a greater compass of knowledge, in hearing at the same time such numerous supplicants in such distant places, than what is really compatible to the state of a creature; but that one good man should bespeak the remembrance of another (in *both their life time*) for his prayers, when they are likely to be most prevalent, carries with it no mystery, nor any bad consequence. And the words of our author do indeed represent this to be his meaning rather than any other; for to say that the chastity of virgins (*incipit honorari*) *begins to be honoured*, when they make a confession of the name of Christ before their martyrdom, seems forced and unnatural; nor had our author any occasion to bespeak their favour, in the way of recommending him to the peace of the church, which was the great privilege of confessors; inasmuch as he had not forfeited, nor was likely to forfeit it; but their prayers he might well desire, when they were likely to be most prevalent, that they would carry out of *this* world a remembrance of him into the *next*; which, by the way, he needed not to have been solicitous about asking of them in their life time, if he had thought *himself* at liberty to ask, or *them* at liberty to *hear* him asking, it after their deaths.

Of the UNITY of the CHURCH.

A. D. 251. Upon occasion of the schism begun by Novatian, who thought himself a fitter person than Cornelius, to be bishop of Rome, and therefore procured himself to be clandestinely ordained by three Italian bishops; St. Cyprian, having thoroughly examined the rival pretensions of Cornelius and Novatian determined to send his letters of communion to the former. The custom of those times for preserving a communication, and communion between distant churches, was by letters of communion sent to and from the bishops of those churches. He who was newly elected bishop notified his election to the other bishops of the christian church; who, if the election were disputed (as it was in this case between Cornelius and Novatian), examined the pretensions of both sides, and then directed their letters to the

the bishop, whose election and ordination they judged most regular. Now A. D. 251. Cornelius, we find, had the choice of the people, the approbation of the clergy, and a regular ordination afterwards confirming the one and the other; so that he was the regular bishop of the church of Rome, and therefore Novatian's opposition to him afterwards was in every part of it schismatical. After this matter had been long debated in the African church, and at last determined in favour of Cornelius; and after many endeavours used by Novatian, to get himself acknowledged, and to procure friends to his cause, St. Cyprian, towards the latter end of the year 251, wrote this tract Of the Unity of the Church, to prevent any ill impressions, which Novatian's attempts might fix on the minds of people, in favour of his schism. This excellent piece deserves to be read with great attention, as stating the antient principles of church-unity in so clear a light, that our modern schismatics might hence alone, if they would come disposed to it, meet with the conviction they so sadly want.



CHRIST our Lord having admonished, and told us, saying, *Ye are the salt of the earth*; and having directed us moreover, to be plain and harmless, but withal to arm our selves with wisdom and prudence; What is there, my beloved brethren, so properly incumbent on us, as a care to find out, and a caution to avoid, the snare which is laid for us by our subtle adversary; lest we who profess to have put on Christ, the wisdom of God the Father, be found at length deficient in a prudential care of our own salvation? We mistake, if we imagine that the only danger we have to fear, arises from that open persecution, which strikes directly at the servants of the true God, and professedly seeks their ruin and destruction: In so plain a case 'tis natural for us to take the alarm, and to be upon our guard; when the enemy shews himself, and advances to attack us in the open light, we prepare and fortify our minds for the encounter, and so he finds us in readiness to receive him: but the danger is then indeed more truly formidable when he creeps slyly towards us, and we do not observe his motions; when under the notion of peace and security he steals upon us unawares, and makes good the propriety of his name by the manner of his proceeding with us. This hath ever been his guile and craft in imposing upon mankind: thus in the infancy of the world, with soft and enticing suggestions he ensnared our first parents, raw, as then they were, and unexperienced. In this very way he made his attempts upon our blessed Lord, under the covert of a disguise, with soft and delusive insinuations; but there he was presently found out and rebuffed, and rebuffed the more easily for being known and discovered: wherefore we have hence a caution to avoid the snare wherein the first man Adam was taken, and encouragement at the same time given us to tread in the footsteps of our second representative, who came off conqueror; that so we may not fall back again through our heedlessness and neglect into the jaws of death, from which we are just delivered; but being warned of our danger, and upon the guard against it, may obtain that immortal life which Christ hath purchased and procured for us. But how will it be possible we ever should obtain it, except we will attend to those commands of our Saviour, through which we may conquer sin and death? Since he hath plainly laid the conditions before us, where he saith; *If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments*. And again; *If ye do whatever I command you, henceforth I call you not servants but friends*. Finally, these are the persons

s. 1.
That with
christian sim-
plicity pru-
dence and obe-
dience should
be joined.
Matt. 5. 13.
Matt. 10. 16.

Matt. 19. 17.
John 15. 14.
15.

^a That open persecution.] The Decian persecution was just now either much abated, or quite finished, so that our author here alludes to a case fresh in memory.

^b Propriety of his name.] Our author's words will not admit the turn in our language, which he had given them in his; because there is no such room for deriving *serpens* from *crouching* in English, as there is for deriving *serpens* from *serpo* in Latin; his words are, *cum per faciem imaginem fallens, occultis accessibus serpit, unde & nomen serpentis accipit*.

L. D. 251. whom he pronounces firm and trusty, these are they who are founded on an immoveable rock; these will stand unshaken against all the storms and tempests of a boisterous world; *Whosoever* (saith he) *heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.* But now with what consistency can any man pretend, that he believes in Christ who will not do what Christ hath commanded him? Or how can he expect to receive the recompence of his faith, who is not true to those engagements under which his faith hath laid him? He must needs be wavering and uncertain in his motions, and be tossed up and down by a spirit of error and delusion, like dust raised by the wind; nor can he ever propound continuing his progress to an happy end of it, who keeps not steady to that *way* and that *truth* which lead to *life*.

§. 2.
*Chiefly to be-
ware of here-
sies.*

2. Nor is our caution, my beloved brethren, to be confined to those dangers only which are plain and obvious, but it must be extended also to such as are less apparent and observable, and are therefore the more apt to *ensnare*, because they *surprize* us, and rather creep upon us by stratagem, than attack us by down-right force. Now since light hath sprung up to lighten the Gentiles, and to save mankind; since the deaf have heard the voice of God propounding to them the terms of salvation; since the blind have begun to open their eyes, and to look up towards him; since the weak and the sickly have felt his saving health, enlivening and adding new vigour to them; since the lame are enabled to *run* into his church, and find a refuge in it; and since the dumb every where perceive their mouths opened, and their tongues loosened to supplicate and praise him; since, I say, our adversary finds his affairs in this posture, and that the coming of Christ hath discovered his stratagems, and weakened his power; what on his part could be a more cunning after-game, than, upon observing his idols and his temples deserted, thro' the multitude of such as believe in Christ, to think of a new device for retrieving his losses, *viz.* by gaining those over to his interest, under the name and shelter of the christian faith, whom he could not prevail upon directly to abandon it? The invention, in short, was this; To sow amongst us heresies and schisms; with *these* to subvert the faith, to corrupt the truth, and to divide us from one another. Them therefore whom he can no longer keep in their former state of darkness, he saith would confound and entangle in the progress of their new undertaking. Thus the church it self proves no security to men against his wiles; he drags them even thence into his service; and whilst they are flattering themselves with an imagination that they are near the light, and have in a manner got clear of all the darkness which before they were involved in, he overspreads them unawares with a darkness of another nature, and leads them into the pernicious error of calling themselves christians, whilst yet they regard not the law of Christ, and keep not up to the tenour of his gospel; thus walking in *darkness*, they think they have the *light* along with them; for so their grand adversary flatters and deceives them, who, as the apostle well hath said of him, *transformeth himself into an angel of light, and suborneth ministers under him to appear as the ministers of righteousness; who put the night for the day, destruction for salvation, despair for hope, betraying the faith instead of keeping it, and promoting the interests of anti-christ under the name of Christ; thus by a similitude of names corrupting the truth of things.*

2 Cor. 11. 14.
15.

§. 3.
*That heresies
owe their rise
to an igno-
rance of the
scriptures, and
see light a re-
gard to the
unity of the
church.*

3. All this mischief hath hence its rise, my beloved brethren, that we will not trace up the truth of things ^c to their original, nor look back to their ^c *To their original.* This was *then*, much more than it is *now*, in the power of christians. And so what *Irenaeus* hath said concerning tradition in b. 3. c. 3, & 4. had *then* more weight in it, than what he (himself) would *now* have thought belonging to it.

fountain head, nor observe the doctrine of our heavenly master. If we would consider these things, and weigh them as we ought, we should have no great need of resorting to argument, or to long debates: For in matters of faith, the way to come at the truth of them is very short and compendious, and *fact* at last is instead of all other proof. We read of our blessed Lord^d saying to Peter, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* And again after his resurrection our Lord saith unto the same Peter, *Feed my sheep.* And tho' we may observe him giving the same power to all his apostles, where he saith, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained;* yet, to manifest his regard to unity, he took his rife from one, and settled the whole upon that foundation. The other apostles were, in truth, what Peter was, entitled to an equal share with him of dignity and power; but, I say, the process began with one, that the church might be considered as one; which one church the Holy Ghost, personating Christ, hath described to us in *Solomon's Song*, saying, *My dove, my undefiled, is one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her who bare her.* Can any man therefore be so weak as to flatter himself that he holds the faith of Christ inviolate, when he doth not preserve the unity of his church? Can any man boast of his continuing in the church, when he sets himself in opposition to it? St. Paul hath told him otherwise, where alluding to the unity of the church, he saith, *There is one body, and one spirit, and one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.* To this unity therefore we should firmly adhere, and be careful to maintain it; especially we bishops, who govern the church, should apply our selves in a most particular manner to uphold its unity, and with it to manifest the unity of our own order. Let no man offer to impose upon our brethren with specious and false preences; or corrupt the purity of our most holy faith, by sneaking

A. D. 251.

Matt. 16. 28,

29.

John 21. 16.

John 20. 21,

22, 23.

Solomon's Song
ch. 6. v. 9.

S. 4.

He makes a
shipwreck of
his faith who
departs from
this unity;
the cement
of which is
the episcopate.
Ephes. 4. 4,
5, 6.

^d *Saying to Peter, &c.* It will be pretty difficult for the church of Rome to confirm the pretensions of her bishop, by an argument rather designed for illustration, than for strict reasoning; in which sort of discourse we know 'tis not unusual to take a liberty of alluding to diverse passages, from which no conclusive proof is ever intended. Our author's argument here is plainly of this sort; and he proceeds in it upon an allusion to Christ's choice of Peter to feed his sheep, and to found his church in the singular number. But yet even upon this very argument he plainly enough declares, that in strictness of reckoning the other apostles were what Peter was. And in his 33^d epistle he expressly asserts, that the church is founded upon bishops in the plural; and indeed his whole management with Cornelius, and with Severus, bishops of Rome, shews he esteemed his episcopal chair in no degree inferior to theirs. Origen hath put a question, which if he now were living would greatly expose him to the danger of the inquisition; if you think (saith he) that the whole church of Christ is founded singly upon the person of Peter, what will become of John, that son of thunder, and indeed of all the other apostles? He plainly makes there the confession of Peter, the rock upon which Christ would build his church, and saith; that we all may have our parts in the honour of thus founding it, if we will make the same confession which Peter did. See him in tract 1. on St. Matthew 16. where he likewise observes, that other bishops claimed and exercised the same authority with Peter, and had a right to do so, if they would, but endeavouring to inherit his virtues, as well as his power. Irenaeus indeed hath given the true reason of all the precedency which the Roman See hath enjoyed, and he speaks for it in terms as high as most of the Antiochian fathers; *ad hanc ecclesiam (viz. Romam) propter potentioris principatum, necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam* — in quod semper ab his qui sunt undique conservata est; ea quae est ab apostolis tradita. Hieron. lib. 3. cap. 3. Now it is no wonder that a church, which was fixed in the imperial seat, and which happened to preserve at that time an uncorrupted purity of doctrine, should have a regard paid to it superior to any other single church. It had indeed better means and helps for preserving the purity of its doctrine, from the circumstance of its being so near the imperial seat; where the greatest numbers of good and able men might naturally be expected; and from whence the records of what had been delivered by the apostles might more faithfully and fully be transmitted, than they could be from any other church. We could wish it were so now; and then we should be left apt to dispute with her bishop any precedencies which he could reasonably claim. See note on S. 3. of 43. epist. [One episcopal chair founded on Peter.]

^e *By sneaking, &c.* Nemo fidei veritatem perfida propositionum corruptis. Persecution is touching but lightly upon the main merits of the cause; and insinuating upon points of less concern; which in advocates was censured as a betraying the cause of their clients. St. Cyprian here is far from imitating them, but speaks boldly and plainly to the point in hand; to the unity of the church and of his own order.

spouse of Christ will not play the harlot, her chastity is unblemished, she hath but one habitation, which she endeavoureth to preserve inviolate, equally free from guilt, and from the suspicion of it. In her custody, under her patronage and protection we are trained up to the knowledge and enjoyment of God, in whose kingdom she assigns to her obedient children their respective interests; whoever therefore is separated from the true Church of Christ, and joins himself to a false one, forfeits his title to the promises of the true: Nor can he ever attain the recompence propounded by Christ to his followers, who deserts his church: No! For he becomes thence un sanctified, an alien, and even a downright enemy. He cannot have God for his Father, who hath not the church for his mother. Could any one, do we find, escape, who was not with Noah in the ark? If any one could, then, and not otherwise, is there room for those to expect security who are out of the church! Our blessed Lord hath given us in this matter a proper caution, where he saith, *He that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.* He therefore who breaks the bonds of christian unity and concord, is censured here as being *against Christ*; whosoever *gathereth* any where but within the church, falleth under the imputation of *scattering it abroad*. Our Saviour hath said, *I and my Father are one.* And again it is written of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *That these three are one.* And can any one imagine, that an unity settled upon so firm a bottom, and cemented by such sacred and awful bonds, shall allowably be broken in the church, through the jarring inclinations and affections of its different members? He, in short, who shall presume to break it, who shall not with all his might endeavour to preserve it, will undergo the censure of breaking the law of God, of having no regard to that holy faith which is the joint and equal care of the Father and of the Son, and consequently will not hold the truth to any saving purpose.

A. D. 251.

Matt. 12. 30.

John 10. 30.

John 5. 7.

6. This

out of the church, the ark, there is no federal salvation. St. Clements Romanus hath pronounced very ill of being so, though in a modest manner, *Epist. ad Corinth. 12. 13.* In 1 epist. ad Corinth. *We shall contract no small guilt, if we reject those from the office of their episcopate, who execute it with holiness, and integrity.* And St. Ignarius, besides what hath already been cited from him, hath told the christians of Ephesus; *whosoever is not within the altar, i. e. who doth not communicate with his bishop, is deprived of the bread of God, and loses the singular advantage of the bishop's prayers, together with those of the church.* In epist. ad Ephes. And again in ep. ad Trall. he tells them, *That he who is not in communion with his bishop, hath not a pure conscience.* And Irenaeus, book 3. c. 40. hath peremptorily asserted, *That no one who is not in the church, is a partaker of the Holy Spirit; but instead of it defrauds himself of life, by his unhappy choice.* To argue against these ancient opinions from modern prejudices, is indeed, to defraud our selves, and to cheat others too, with infinite hazard of theirs and our own salvation. The conclusion of the paragraph, we may observe, will not allow an agreement in doctrinal truths to be of any significance, where there is such a separation. *Veritatem non eras ad salutem.* Novatian differed not from Cereus in any point of doctrine, which however did not excuse his schism: What advances God of his infinite mercy shall make to pitiable prejudices, is by no means hence predetermined; but we see they had not weight enough with these fathers, though otherwise men of great and comprehensive charity, to give up the rule in favour of any such exceptions; which it belongs indeed properly to none to make, but to God only: Since he alone who settled the rule can dispense with it; wherefore as we are not to set bounds to his mercy, nor to say how far it shall not go, it will as little become us to lay any force upon it, or to be peremptory in determining how far it must or shall go.

These three are one. There is hardly any text whose authority hath been so much disputed as this hath been of late; the silence of the Great MSS. and especially of the *Alexandrian*, is doubtless a great prejudice against it, the weight of which must have sunk its credit, had not *Tertullian* in his book against *Praxeas*, chap. 25. alluded to it, and our author here more directly quoted it: But now to say, (as some have done) that the 7th verse of 1 John 5. as it stands at present in our printed editions, is their comment upon the 8th, is wholly groundless, and utterly improbable from their manner of writing. I do not indeed remember that *Origen* himself, the father of the mystical interpreters, who took the largest liberties in this way, did in any instance go so far as to give his mystical comment for the very text it self. Indeed he often makes strange excursions, but still without danger of confounding his interpretation with the words of holy scripture. St. Cyprian is a much purer and chaster writer, and hath no where given a suspicion that he would deal thus by his reader, but were he never so much accustomed to indulge himself in this way to extraordinary lengths, surely he would not say expressly as here he do's, *It is written of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that these three are one*; if there had been in his time no copy extant to bear him out in such a citation. It hath been objected to *Tertullian's* manner of alluding to this, that he only saith it as from himself, *these three are one*; but doth not there say as he doth in the words which follow, (where he expressly quotes John 10. 30.) *It is said, or it is written, I and my Father are one*.

It is said in every part of the description. 3

A. D. 251.
§. 6.

That the coat
of Christ was
not to be rent,
or divided.

John 19. 23,
24.

1 Kings 11.
29, 30, 31, 32.

6. This representation of their unity, this inseparable connection of one to the other, is well exhibited to us in that passage of the gospel, where we are told that the coat of Christ was not rent nor divided, but the entire garment was delivered out whole upon the casting of lots who should have it. For thus the holy scripture speaks upon that occasion; *The coat being without seam, and woven from the top throughout, the soldiers said among themselves, Let us not rent it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.* Its being without seam, and woven from the top, was a very fit emblem of that undivided unity which cometh from above, that is, from heaven, and from God the Father, who dwelleth there; it was unfit to be rent or divided by those who should possess it, and was therefore to remain whole and entire, as it was made at first. The garment of Christ will therefore fit none, who divide his church, and crumble it into sects and parties. Quite otherwise we read, that when upon the death of Solomon his kingdom and people were to be divided, *Abijah the prophet, meeting King Jeroboam in the field, rent his garment in twelve pieces, and said, Take thou ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee. But he shall have two tribes for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen to place my name there.* So we see, that when the twelve tribes of Israel were to be divided, the prophet *Abijah* rent his garment. But now, as the followers of Christ are not to be divided, his coat, we have been told, was *without seam, woven throughout*, and accordingly was not rent by those, into whose hands it fell; and being thus seamless and undivided, it is, I say, a very lively em-

blem. So that it seems in this case it would have been allowed that *Tertullian* did quote the disputed verse, if he had introduced it, as our author hath done, with an *it is written*; and indeed it must have been allowed; or else we shall never know how to distinguish a quotation of scripture from any author's own words; but yet they who are unwilling that this text should stand in the bible, will needs have it that *St. Cyprian* here hath deceived us, by representing that to be scripture which is not scripture, and by giving his own far-fetched comment instead of the real text. Whatever may be alleged out of other fathers, I will venture to affirm that there is no instance in our author of so wild an interpretation of an important text, as that which is here imputed to him; much less is there to be found in him, or indeed in any other father, a precedent for quoting his, or their own comment, as the text it self, where the comment is so forced and unnatural as this. For though instead of *lead us not into temptation*, our author hath substituted *suffer us not to be led*, and though in this very citation he reads *son* instead of *word*, yet these are variations so little departing from the very terms of the scripture quoted, and not at all from its *sense*, that we may not thence conclude he would take a liberty to much more extraordinary, where words and *sense* are both so entirely altered. Indeed *Facundus*, a writer of the fifth century, hath given his opinion, that *St. Cyprian* did take this extraordinary liberty. A single writer hath said so, or if more had said so, are we bound to believe them, in so improbable a case? I guess not. But now that the African church was, in the same fifth century, possessed of some copies, whose reading of this verse was not elsewhere current, we have an ample testimony in that confession of *Engenius* and the African bishops, delivered to King *Huneric*, and upon this occasion mentioned by the very learned *Dr. Mill*, which indisputably cites the disputed verse, without any apology, or any apprehension of a doubt, whether it would be acknowledged, or not. If its authority had not been held by them as indisputable, they could not have done this, the *Arians* lying then upon the catch against them. So here is the authority of the whole African church, in a matter of fact, which they could not easily mistake, to be set against the authority of *Facundus*, in a matter of opinion, wherein we may easily suppose him to have been mistaken. Whether we can, or cannot, account for the silence of the Greek MSS. we should not, I think, depart from one positive testimony, in a case of this nature, for the sake of one hundred negative ones. 'Tis not impossible, but that the translator's eye might casually slip from *magister* (bear witness) in the 7th verse, to the same words in the 8th, and then that the words in *earth* in the 8th, might afterwards be left out as superfluous, when upon the loss of the whole 7th verse nothing could be made of them. I say there is nothing unnatural in this supposition: And one copy mistaking, or slipping over, the 7th verse very early, would be a reason for many thousand following it. However, if this verse should upon the whole be marked in our bibles as of dubious authority, because so many MSS. omit it, I know no harm in such an expression of our diffidence concerning it. I am of opinion that *Tertullian*, in the place just cited from him, did clearly allude to it, as known in his time; and our author expressly saith, it was so written: which is directly quoting it. *Tertullian*, however, hath made us amends for his less certain way of quoting this text, by directly affirming the *homonymy*, or *consubstantial doctrine*, which is contained in it. Thus the Father and the Son (saith he) *concurring in the Paraclete* (or Comforter,) *make three subsisting one under another: which three are one*, (in the *number*, not in the *essence*, one being, not one person, *unum, non unus*;) *even as it is written, I and my Father are one*: which expresses the unity of their *essence*, and not the identity of their *substance*. *Substantia unitatem, non personarum singularitatem, c. 25. aduers. Prax.* He mentions in the same treatise the *unity of their substance*, and the *Trinity in unity*, expressly. *Trinitas in unitate, et unitas in trinitate, c. 26.* I cannot say the LXX. and our author, *Isaiah*, *The Arabic and Syriac read it, tribes*; the Hebrew, *tribes*; and so the *Chaldean paraphrast*.

blem to us, of that inseparable union which ought to be maintained among his followers, who are emphatically said to have put on the Lord Jesus: thus the unity of his church is not improperly represented to us under the figure of his seamless coat.

7. Who is there then amongst us so profligate and abandoned, so false to the trust reposed in him, or so desperately in love with discord and dissention, as to imagine that the unity, which we have been taught is maintained in heaven, may be broken upon earth? That the coat of Christ, which we have been told is seamless, will endure to be rent? Or that the church of Christ, which is always described to us as one only, can be split into more? To believe that this is possible, is gross absurdity; but to make any attempt towards it, is flagrant wickedness. Our Lord himself, one would suppose, had guarded sufficiently against any attempts or apprehensions of this nature, by expressly telling us, as he hath done in the gospel, that there should be one fold, and one shepherd. For can any one, after such a declaration, frame a thought of more flocks or more shepherds than one, in the same place, and at the same time? St. Paul hath inculcated our present doctrine, where he beseeches and exhorts the Corinthians, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they would all speak the same thing, and that there might be no divisions amongst them; but that they would be perfectly joined in the same mind, and in the same judgment. And again he hath recommended to the Ephesians, forbearing one another in love, and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And can you after this conceive, that any man will be supported in his spiritual life, who withdraws himself out of the church, and seeks to other resorts and other habitations? The church was prefigured to us in the person and the case of Raab; and to her we may observe it said, Thou shalt gather thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee; and it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of the house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head. And one main observance in the law of Moses concerning the passover was, that the lamb, whose death prefigured that of Christ, should be eaten in one house. In one house (saith God) shall it be eaten; ye shall not throw ought of the flesh abroad out of the house. Nor may the christian passover, the flesh of Christ, or what is holy to the Lord, be thrown abroad out of the house; nor have believers any house to eat it in but one, which is the one, the only, church. This house, wherein dwell unity and unanimity, the Holy Spirit hath pointed to us in the book of psalms, where we are told, that it is God who maketh men to be of one mind in an house. For in the house of God, and in the church of Christ, none can continue, who are not of one mind, who are not well disposed to an unity of affections, and to a simplicity of manners.

8. This was the reason why the Holy Ghost appeared in the likeness of a dove. For that bird is distinguished by its innocence and good nature, as an harmless and galled creature, which neither bites, nor scratches, nor exhibits any marks of violence or fury; but is tame and tractable, true to its mate, and each takes to it self an equal share in providing for their young ones; when they go abroad in quest of food, they keep together in flocks, they live as it were in common, and with the mutual salutation of their bills; they testify their love and amity towards each other; thus in every point observing the rules of peace, and agreeing together in a perfect harmony. This is that simplicity by which the church of Christ should likewise be distinguished; this, that charity which all her members should endeavour to maintain one with another; their mutual love should resemble what hath been here described; in lenity and good nature, they should be like lambs and sheep:

^m Who maketh.] See note on §. 86. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.
ⁿ True, &c.] See Pliny's account of this bird, b. 10. c. 34. N. B. The manners of christians are here alluded to in every part of this description.

A. D. 251. For how misbecoming the character of a christian is the savageness of a wolf? or the fierceness of a dog? or the deadly poyson of a serpent? or the wildness and blood-thirstiness of a beast of prey? It is a just occasion of rejoicing to us, when such are separated from the church; as it is a proper ground of our fear, that their continuance in it might communicate the contagion of their deadly poyson to the harmless doves of Christ, and the uninfected sheep of his pasture: As well may bitter and sweet hang long together; light and darkness meet; clear and cloudy, fair and tempestuous weather join with each other; peace and war be consistent; droughth and moisture; fruitfulness and barrenness, be found united in the same subject!

§. 9.
That heresy
discovers the
secret naugh-
tiness of a can-
ker'd heart,
and approves
the constancy
and truth of
a good chris-
tian.

1 John 2. 19.

9. Let no one imagine, that a truly good man will ever quit the church of Christ. The wind is not used to carry off the good wheat along with it; nor will a storm tear up a tree, which is deeply and strongly rooted in the earth. It is the light and empty chaff which the wind scattereth; and the trees, whose root is weak and unsettled, are most commonly torn up by the fury of a storm. Of men like these, the apostle St. John hath pronounced with a just severity; *They went out* (saith he) *from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* This hath been heretofore, and still is, the grand source of heresy, that men of perverse minds have no regard to peace, are false to their trust, and no lovers of unity. These are things which our Lord permits and suffers, leaving to free agents the use and exercise of their proper^e liberty, that so the fidelity and perseverance of the righteous may be brought to their proper test, be set in a clear advantageous light, and come off from the scrutiny with honour and approbation. This is the apostle's account of the matter, and he

1 Cor. 11. 19.

81. 1. 19.

21

§. 10.
A description
given of here-
tics.

Psal. 1. 1.

2 Tim. 2. 17.

Jerem. 23. 16.

17.

Mid. 12. 22.

10. These are they, who, in a conventicle of a few rash strangers, get themselves clandestinely ordained, against all the rules of divine appointment, as well as of human order; who, without any proper call to the episcopal office, usurp the name and authority of a bishop, whom the Spirit of God hath before-hand marked out in the book of *psalms*, as sitting^r in the seat of pestilence and destruction; being indeed the very pest and bane of our religion, cunning in the art of deceitful words, very successful in their endeavours to corrupt the truth, spreading far and near the poyson of their venomous tongues, whose words will eat as a canker, and whose discourses carry death and ruin to all who listen to them. Against the men of this complexion our Lord heretofore warned his people, and endeavoured to reclaim them from following such erroneous guides, saying, *Hearken not unto the words of the false prophets, because the visions of their own heart deceive them, they speak, but not out of the mouth of the Lord: They say unto them who reject the word of the Lord, ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one who walketh in the imagination of his own heart, no evil shall come upon you. Whereas I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied: But*

^e Liberty.] Liberty of will and action the reader will observe is here asserted.

^r Day of judgment.] *Summum futuri judicii prajudicium*, Tertullian had before called it. Apol. c. 39.

^s A few, &c.] Novatian got himself ordained by three Italian bishops in a chamber, without the consent of clergy or people.

^t In the seat of pestilence and destruction.] *Assidue* say the LXX, which our author translates *pestilential*. The Hebrew reads it *scorners*, so doth the Syriac version, and the Chaldean paraphrase; but the Arabic version gives it the more general word of *sinners*.

The numbers of the names of the persons who were present at the Council of Nice, and the names of the persons who were present at the Council of Constantinople, are given in the margin of the text.

The names of the persons who were present at the Council of Ephesus, and the names of the persons who were present at the Council of Chalcedon, are given in the margin of the text.

The names of the persons who were present at the Council of Nice, and the names of the persons who were present at the Council of Constantinople, are given in the margin of the text.

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if they had stood^c upon my foundation, and had heard my words, and had taught them to my people, then should I have turned them from their evil thoughts. The same sort of people had been before described, where the spirit of God said of them; *They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns which can hold no water.* And thus the men, of whom I have written, deceive themselves and others, with the vain opinion that they have the power of admitting into the church by baptism; when indeed there is and can be but *one baptism*, [^cand consequently one only way of admitting into the church by it]. They leave the fountain of life, and yet absurdly undertake to confer the benefits which flow from those *living waters*. Whereas indeed the deluded people, who put themselves into their hands, are rather defiled than cleansed by the waters wherewith they pretend to wash them; their sins are so far from being purged away by them, that their guilt hath thence a great addition to it. Such a new birth as *that* brings sons to the devil, but none to God. They procure it by treachery and falshood, and therefore can never thence be entitled to an inheritance of the promises made only to the way of truth. They are begotten by a breach of faith, and so forfeit in course the advantages entailed upon an uncorrupted faith: To the reward of peace they can have no claim, who have broken the peace of our Lord [^vand of his church] by the rage and fury of their dissention and schism.

II. Let no one then deceive himself with that saying of our Saviour, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*: For these false interpreters, these corrupters of the gospel of Christ, set down the latter part, which they think for their turn, and leave out the former which makes against them; thus carefully inserting the one, and craftily suppressing the other. As they themselves are disjoined from the church, so they disjoin one branch of the same chapter from another. Our blessed Lord in this very passage was recommending to his disciples unanimity and peace: *I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing which ye shall ask, it shall be done for you of my Father which is in heaven; for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*: Here then he plainly shews himself more concerned for the *unanimity* of the supplicants, than for the *number* they should consist of; *If two of you* (saith he) *shall agree*: whence we may observe that a mutual agreement was the foundation of all which followed, peace ushered in the promise, and the main design of this whole lesson was instructing us in the duties of love and concord: But now with what tolerable propriety can he be said to perform his part of a *mutual agreement*, who disagrees with the body of Christ's church, and with the whole brotherhood thereunto belonging? How can *two or three* be thought *gathered together in the name of Christ*, who are apparently disjoined from Christ, and from his blessed gospel? * For we did

^c Upon my foundation.] The LXX read it here *ὑποστάσεις*, as in the 18th verse they read it *ὑποστάσεις*. Our author translates it literally, in *substantia mea*: we read it *counsel*. I could think of no better word, for reaching at once our author's expression, and what I conceive the true sense of the passage, than the version I have given it; the Hebrew and Chaldean paraphrast read it *my secret*.

^v And consequently one only way of admitting into the church by it.] These words I have ventured to add as explanatory to our author's, and I presume they do only explain his sense more fully, without advancing any new or different notion, or carrying the point any farther than he meant to carry it: So far therefore I am within the bounds of a translator, who should never, I think, be solicitous, *verbum verbo reddere*. Now concerning this subject of *one only baptism*, which is the very expression of an inspired writer (*Ephes. 4. 5.*) there will be a farther opportunity of enlarging on it, when we come to consider the weight of those reasons which were urged for it, by the several bishops assembled in council at Carthage, A. D. 256.

^v And of his church.] Here again I have ventured upon an explanatory addition, since our author had no otherwise reason to say, that the *peace of our Lord was*, in this case, *broken*, than as the *peace of his church* was violated.

^{*} For we did not, &c.] Here the argument turns upon possession, *cujus conditio melior*. Cornelius and Cyprian were in possession of their respective sees; therefore good cause should have been shewn why they

- A. D. 251. did not separate our selves from them, but they disjoined themselves from us; and when upon the rise of heresies and schisms afterwards, they betook themselves to clandestine assemblies, they forsook the fountain-head, whence all the streams of religious truth were spread throughout the world: But now our blessed Lord refers most apparently to his church, and to its members in the passage last cited, where he saith, That if they would be unanimous, if according to the tenor of his declaration, but *two or three of them could agree in asking any thing* of God, why then those two or three should be sure to obtain whatever they should so concur in asking: For, (saith he) *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*; as if he had said, "I am ever in the midst of such as are plain and open-hearted, peaceable and pious, and observers of my law. These, though but two or three of them, my gracious presence shall ever accompany."
- Dan. 3. 25. Just so his presence accompanied the three young men in the fiery furnace, and as they walked before him, in *Godly sincerity*, and were *all of one mind*, he refreshed them in the midst of the flames with the *comforts of his Spirit*. The same gracious presence, for the same reason, accompanied his two apostles in prison; *He opened the prison doors* for them, and gave them their liberty, that they might deliver that word of his to the people, of which they were such faithful and true preachers. Wherefore when he lays it down for a rule, and saith; *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*; he who founded and formed the church, can with no justice be interpreted to mean the separation of any from it; but rather he must be understood as upbraiding the ² betrayers of their trust with their dissention, as ³ recommending peace to his faithful servants; and as with this view, telling them, That he would rather be *in the midst of two or three agreeing in any thing they should ask of him*, than with a far greater number of *disagreeing supplicants*; that a prayer put up to him by a *few in the unity of the spirit, and the bond of peace*, would be more available than what should be offered by *many* with jarring affections and disunited hearts: When he was therefore prescribing a rule for prayer, he added the following
- Mark 11. 25. as a requisite condition of its success; *When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses*: In the like manner he discouraged any from coming
- Matt. 5. 23, 24. *to the altar* with a contentious spirit, bid him *first be reconciled to his brother*; and so returning with a peaceable disposition, he might offer his gift to God. Thus *to Cain and to his offering God had no respect*; it being utterly indeed impossible that God should be well pleased with any man, whose ill-will and envy had broken through all measures of peace and friendship with his brother.
- Gen. 4. 5.

they should not continue so; and if no such cause could be shewn, they were the schismatics who made the separation. Now our author, we see, takes it here for granted that they were separated from the gracious presence of Christ amongst them, who thus separated themselves from his mystical body, which is the church.

¹ *The fountain head, &c.*] By this 'tis pretty plain our author could mean no particular church, but the church of Christ in general, which is the *pillar and ground of truth*. This the tenour of his argument most apparently supposes; and this his next following words as clearly confirm; otherwise indeed, *the fountain head of truth*, from whence, in fact, the streams of christian truth flowed out upon the world, was the church of Jerusalem.

² *Betrayers of their trust.*] *Perfidus* is a word which our author often makes synonymous with hereticks and schismatics; but most especially with the leaders of such practices. For every one who was admitted into the church had some degree of *trust* reposed in him, that he would behave as should become the station to which he was admitted. But every *presbyter* (and such was *Nevarian* before his assuming the episcopal office) had a larger share of this trust reposed in him, and therefore had the more to account for, when ever he should betray it (as now he had done) by heresy or schism.

³ *Recommending peace.*] Our author, we may observe, did not think it inconsistent with peace and moderation, to tell those, who were guilty of schism, that they were in extreme danger by being so; he rather chose to express his charity, by asserting the necessity of their returning to the church they had forsaken, than by soothing them in their sin, or by diminishing the hazard they should incur from it.

12. What prospect of peace can then be entertained by such as prove themselves enemies to their brethren? Or how can they, who set themselves up as rivals to the priests of God, expect to offer him an acceptable sacrifice? If such should even suffer martyrdom for the name of Christ, they would not even with martyrdom expiate a crime of so black a dye. No sufferings can blot out the guilt of a sin so heinous, and so unpardonable, as that of schism. There can be no such thing as a martyr out of the church. He can never attain to the kingdom of Christ, who deserts the church of Christ, which is to reign in it. Christ bequeathed us his peace at leaving us; directed us to live together in peace and unity; and never to violate its sacred bonds: So that he must never pretend to bear a proper testimony to a religion of such a genius, no not even by his death, who lives in variance and discord with his brethren, and breaks in upon the law of ecclesiastical unity. The apostle St. Paul hath intimated thus much to us, where he saith; *Tho' I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing. And tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and tho' I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity is generous, brave spirited, and kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not it self, doth not behave it self unseemly, is not puffed up, nor easily provoked, thinketh no evil; kindly covereth all things, believeth all things; hopeth all things, endureth all things; charity (he adds) never faileth; but shall for ever bear its part in the kingdom of Christ, and be conspicuous in the unity and mutual agreement of christian brethren. Variance and discord can never enter into the kingdom of heaven, nor attain the promises of Christ, who hath said, This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you; so that he can claim no manner of relation to, or interest in, Christ, who hath betrayed and broken that law of love which Christ hath recommended. He, in short, who hath not charity, hath not God dwelling in him; It is the declaration of the apostle St. John, That God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. They can never therefore be interpreted to dwell with God, who know not how to live in peace and unity with his church; tho' they should be thrown into the fire, or be scorched in flames, or have their lives exposed to the fury of wild beasts; such a death will never be interpreted as a crown of their faith and constancy, but rather as a punishment of their betraying it, and of their departure from it; it will not here be esteemed, as in other cases, an honourable end of a man, true to his religion, and firm to the interests of the gospel; but rather as the obstinate death of a man abandoned to despair, and bent upon his own destruction. Such a man may be put to death, but he can never be entitled to the crown of martyrdom.*

A. D. 351.
§. 12.
That martyrdom is self cannot atone for the guilt of schism.

John 14. 27.

1 Cor. 13. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

John 15. 12.

1 John 4. 16.

13. He may profess himself, if he will, a christian; as the devil hath sometimes put on the likeness of Christ. A practice of his, which our blessed Lord foretold to us, in those words: *Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.* Now as the devil is not really Christ, though he deceives many into a belief that he is so, by boldly assuming his

§. 13.
That he is a christian in name only, who doth not improve and cultivate brotherly love.
Mark 13. 61.

Even with martyrdom. Considering the high notions which were antiently entertained of martyrdom, and of its power to cover sins, nothing could more strongly set forth the heinousness of the sin of schism, than saying, That martyrdom it self would not atone for it.

Generous and brave spirited. *Magnanimus*, is our author translates, *generosus*. Tertullian in his book de Patientia had called it *magnanimitas*; instead of which the barbarous word *longanimus* hath become more prevalent. (Bishop Fell.) Now it is a part of generosity to be, what is meant by *longanimus*, patient, or long-suffering; and most versions read it thus.

Kindly covereth. *Omnia diligit*, saith our author; *omnia diligit* in the original. I have given it a turn in my translation; which hath some respect to both those meanings. The *Elhiopid* version reads it, *It is every thing compassionate and patient.* Our author very probably read, instead of *omnia* (*diligit*) which is our present reading, *cicym* (*lovet*).

A crown of their faith. Martyrdom was generally so called and interpreted, as leading so surely and so immediately to a crown of glory. But here, our author says, it would be judged quite otherwise; and he glances herein upon some troublesome confessors, who grew assuming upon the merit of their sufferings, and fell in too easily with schismatical and factious practices.

with divers lusts; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith; but they shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. This, in every part of it, we may now observe fulfilled; and as the end of the world is near approaching towards us, both men and things are brought to their proper tests. As the rage of our great adversary increaseth more and more against us, we grow more and more apt to be misled by error, to be elated with an ignorant and vain conceit, to be enflamed against each other with envy, to be blinded with lust, to be corrupted by a spirit of profaneness, to be puffed up with pride, to be provoked by mutual dissensions, and to be made outrageous by wrath and resentment. We, however, should not be moved from our own constancy, nor disturbed in our minds upon observing that others are false to the trust reposed in them; but our faith should rather be strengthened upon finding, that the event of things doth so exactly answer the prediction of them. As some have, in the worst sense, proved themselves to be what it was foretold they should be, so the rest of our brethren should thence beware of being like them; our Lord having given us beforehand a proper warning to that purpose; *Take ye heed (saith he) behold I have foretold you all things.* Avoid then, I beseech you, the men of this disposition; hearken not to their pernicious discourses, but fly from them as you would from the rankest infection, remembering the wise man's counsel; *Hedge in thine ears with thorns, and hearken not to a perverse tongue.* And again the apostle hath warned us to the same purpose, where he observes, *That evil communications corrupt good manners.* Our Lord hath directed us to withdraw our selves from such men, telling us, *That they are blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* Wherefore we must be very careful to shun every one, who [either by his own act, or by a proper authority] is separated from the church of Christ: For he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. And can he afterwards believe that he is in fellowship with Christ, who acts in an avowed opposition to his ministers and bishops? Who separates himself from the communion of his clergy and people? He bears hostile arms against the Church of Christ, and opposes the order and oeconomy appointed by God in it; he is an enemy to the altar of Christ, and to the sacrifice which is offered upon it; is a betrayer of his faith and truth; a sacrilegious profaner of his worship, a rebellious servant, a disobedient son, a quarrellous brother, and agreeably to the full extent of these several characters, in contempt of the bishops and presbyters of God's church, he presumes to set up an altar in opposition to theirs, to offer up unauthorized prayers at it, and to profane the most solemn mysteries of Christian worship, by daring to mix with them his unhallowed incense; forgetting all this while, that he who shall thus adventure to resist the ordinance of God, will expose himself to his vengeance for such an audacious and rash attempt.

15. Thus *Chorah, Dathan, and Abiram*, who claimed to themselves a right of sacrificing, in opposition to *Moses*, and to *Aaron* the priest, were punished from heaven for their impious presumption; the earth burst asunder

and they perished. See this text cited and noted in 3. 3. 3. book of testimonies. *Withstand our power.* So the apostle in his 11. epistle to the *Thess.* 3. chapter and 6. verse, hath been solemnly commanded, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And the 104. apostolick canon hath denounced excommunication to such as should join, *even in family prayer,* with a person so communicate. Now *Novatian* had excommunicated himself, and therefore all persons were obliged to withdraw themselves from him. Whatever discipline pulled upon any one, from his proper bishop, was held valid by all the bishops in the world, and the person so censured had no remedy, but by an appeal to a provincial synod, which therefore was held every where twice in the year. *Novatian* hath commented upon the 37. apostolick canon. (Bishop *Barrow*) and

A. D. 241.

Mark 13. 23.

Matt. 23. 24.

Tim. 3. 11.

Num. 16. 31, 32, 35.

A. D. 251.

and opened her mouth, and the enormous gap which was made by the ground thus cleft, *swallowed them up alive*. Nor did the wrath of God Almighty stop in that instance, at the first authors of schism, but *a fire went out from the Lord* and consumed, with a speedy vengeance, the two hundred and fifty men who had joined with them in their sacrilegious and mad attempt. In which example we have this admonition and intimation fairly given us, that whatsoever shall be attempted against the ordinances of God, by the wickedness and rashness of men, will be construed as an affront intended and offered to God himself.

2 Chron. 26.

18, 19.

2 Kings 15. 5.

Thus when King *Uzziah* would not hearken to *Azariah* the Priest, but would needs offer incense against his consent, and notwithstanding his intreaties to him to desist; the anger of God overtook him, and his forehead became all over leprous. Now here by the way it is pretty remarkable, that the punishment of his offence against God should light upon the very part of his body whereupon we make the ^m signature of the cross, become the servants of Christ, and are thereby entituled to his favour and

Levit. 10. 1, 2.

mercy. Thus likewise it fared with *the sons of Aaron, who offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not, and died immediately before him*, upon his resentment of their crying provocation. All these practices are imitated and followed by such as despise the rule appointed by God, and fall into different and foreign methods, of human invention; whom our Lord hath well rebuked in his gospel, saying to the men of this completion; *Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may establish your own tradition.*

Mark 7. 9.

§. 16.

That the schismatick is a more grievous sinner than the lapsed, and cannot atone for his sin even by martyrdom.

16. The crime of these men hath a worse face with it, than even of such as have lapsed in time of persecution; who yet are awarded to a state of penance, in which they are to fulfil the time assigned them, for obtaining the mercies of God by ^a all sorts of humiliation. In the one case great application is made for a re-admission *into* the church, in the other there is great sturdiness and obstinacy in keeping *out* of it. It is possible, that in the case of the *lapsed* there might have been ^o some force and compulsion used to gain him; but in the case of the *schismatick*, his will alone is faulty, and entirely chargeable with his guilt. The *lapsed* hurts none but himself by his transgression; but he, who is the patron of *heresy* or *schism*, endeavours to propagate and spread his guilt, and to draw as many as he can besides into it. So that *one* risks only a single soul, whilst the *other* endangers many more. The *former* acknowledges his offence, bewails and laments it grievously; but the *latter* glories in his crime, is even conceited, and fond of it, and so goes on in his pernicious endeavours, to separate children from their mother, and the sheep from their shepherd, and in perverting the order and oeconomy of Christ's institutions. The *lapsed* sins but once; whilst the *schismatick* daily renews his crime. In fine, the *lapsed* may suffer martyrdom, and thence may partake of the promises of God in his kingdom; whereas if the *schismatick* should suffer *out* of the church of Christ, he will never thence become entituled to the recompence, which none can claim, who are not *in* it.

§. 17.

That it is no wonder if some schismatics, when they are found in this point

17. Nor should it, my beloved brethren, be matter of surprize to any one to observe, that some, ^p even of the confessors themselves, are found in this point

in the signature of the cross.

It hath already been observed in §. 16 of the 2^d book of Testimonies, that the sign of the cross was in use upon any circumstance of moment, and therefore could hardly be left out upon so solemn an occasion as that of baptism. Nor indeed will the words here used allow us to suppose it at such a time omitted. *Ed parte corporis notatus offensio Domino, ubi signatur qui Dominum promittitur.* No other signature of the cross, but that which was used at baptism, could with any sense be said *Dominum promittitur*; to reconcile, or to gain the favour of, God. Nor then indeed any other will than as the whole sacred action was denominated from that single circumstance. See note on §. 2. of the case of the *lapsed*; *scilicet signature*.

[All sorts of humiliation.]

There will be a more proper occasion of considering this in the next book, which professes to handle the case of the *lapsed*. What this humiliation was, and how severe the rigour of it were, I have distinctly considered in a treatise of the *penitential Discipline*, ch. 2. part 1. §. 2.

[Some force.]

Viz. excess of torment, beyond what human nature could bear.

[Even of the confessors.]

Here our author touches upon *Maximus*, *Nicostratus*, *Evaristus*, and others, who

point tardy; nor that others, led by the influence of their example, should fall into like enormities. For the confession of Christ, in a dangerous juncture, doth by no means exempt any man from the snares of the devil, nor will our present state admit of our being privileged under any circumstances, from the common temptations and incursions of our ghostly enemy; and indeed if indefectible virtue were a gift allotted to such a *confession*, we should never have so much reason, as we often have, to lament the manifold stains contracted afterwards by those who have *made* it; the frauds, and rapes, and adulteries, which we have seen committed by such as have been confessors. How great or how esteemable soever any confessor may be, 'tis certain he is neither greater, nor better, nor in higher account with God, than *Solomon* was; who yet retained the favour which he had with God no longer than whilst he continued walking in his ways; which as soon as he forsook, he lost the favour thereupon depending; and so we find it written, That the Lord ⁹ stirred up *satan* against *Solomon*. For which reason the following caution is upon record; *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown*. This now was a danger, which our Lord would surely not have suggested, nor in any manner intimated, that the crown of righteousness could be ever forfeited, unless upon the loss of that righteousness, the loss of the crown had followed as a necessary consequence! Indeed the confession of Christ, in critical emergencies, is only one step towards glory; but it hath by no means yet earned its crown. There is a proper degree of praise which hath thence its rise, and its commencement; but to complete and perfect it, there must be a farther process. And since it is written, *He that endureth unto the end shall be saved*; whatsoever attainments are previous to such end, should be considered rather as steps which lead to the top of the ascent, than as the very top it self. A confessor, 'tis allowed, hath great advantages; but then his danger and his duty rise in proportion to them; for his adversary thence is the more enraged against him; and he is the more obliged to a strict observance of the gospel, from having attained already to such a measure of grace and of glory by it. For our Lord hath thus determined upon the case before us; *To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required*; and to whom much honour hath been ascribed, of him proportionable performances will be expected. Let no one therefore be tempted to venture his soul upon the credit of a confessor, or learn from his practice, injustice, arrogance, or breach of faith. As he is a confessor, he should be meek and humble, and modestly keep within the rank prescribed to him; and as he is called a confessor of Christ, he should imitate Christ in his practice, as well as confess his name. Now since Christ hath declared, that *whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*; and since he was himself exalted by his Father, because, tho' he was the word, and power, and wisdom of God, yet he humbled himself upon earth; how is it imaginable, that he should love an haughty disposition, who hath prescribed humility to us in his gospel, and himself received from his Father an ample recompence for his own humiliation? A confessor of Christ can never preserve his title to that glorious character, if the majesty and honour of Christ be, thro' him blasphemed. The tongue which hath confessed Christ, should never after that speak evil, never be turbulent, quarrellous, or noisy; after having once witnessed a good confession, it should never thenceforwards be found spitting its venom against the brethren, or reviling the priesthood of God's holy church. If it shall prove in these points faulty, and shall thence deserve the abhorrence of all good men; if it shall lavish away the advantages

A. D. 357.

1 Kings 11.

14. Revel. 3. 11.

Matt. 10. 22.

Luke 12. 48.

Matt. 23. 12.

who had recommended *Novarian*, by their letters, to the episcopal chair, which he aspired to, and who took his part in that injurious and schismatical pretension. Bishop Fell.

⁹ Stirred up *satan*.] i. e. An adversary, as our *English* version renders it. N. B. The possibility of falling from grace, is here all along supposed and inculcated.

310

A. D. 251. of its laudable confession by an unsuitable conversation, and stain the life which it had before adorned; if the man, whom it hath made a confessor, shall leave the church in which he became so, shall break the bonds of unity, and betray the faith, he was before so true to; (if this, I say, shall be found his case) he must never flatter himself, as if his past confession were a mark of his being elected to a crown of glory, inasmuch as his demerits have thence indeed the greater aggravation, and the punishment of his fall will, in reality, be the heavier for the height he is fallen from; our blessed Lord, we know, elected Judas to be in the number of his twelve apostles; and yet did Judas after that betray him.

§. 18.
That the fall
of some con-
fessors doth
not lessen the
glory of the
rest.
Rom. 3. 3, 4.

18. Yet were not the faith and constancy of the other apostles shaken, because the traitor Judas revolted from their company; nor are the honour and sanctity of confessors in this case sufferers, because the faith of some in that number could not stand the test. The blessed apostle hath put a case somewhat like the present, where he saith; *What if some have fallen from the faith? Hath their unbelief made the faith of God without effect? God forbid! For God is true, and every man a liar.* The major part of our confessors have preserved their faith untainted and unshaken, and have governed themselves in all points by the rules of the gospel; they have taken no single step injurious to the peace of the church, as remembering that in the church they arrived at the honours due to their illustrious character; and the firmness of their faith becomes hence entitled to the greater commendation, that they have avoided all participation of those men's sins, whose partners they had been in the honour of their glorious confession; but with the advantage of a clear gospel-light, and an untainted innocence, like that of their Lord and master, they have merited as high encomiums, for preserving the peace of his church inviolate, as before they had done, by their successful conflict with his and their common enemy.

§. 19.
That all in-
tercourse with
schismatics is
to be avoided.

19. My heart's desire, brethren, is, and I should rejoyce if any exhortation or advice of mine might be so effectual, that no single soul should be lost out of the flock of Christ; but that our mother, the church, should see all her children united in one body, and safe within her bosom; yet if the event of things should prove so unhappy, that she should not prevail upon certain leaders of the schism, and heads of the faction, to quit their desperate courses, and to return into her pasture; let others, however, who have been misled by them, through their own simplicity and undesigning error, or through the cunning craftiness of those who have lain in wait to deceive them; (let such I say) disengage with the soonest from the snare they are involved in, return immediately from the error of their ways, and steer the course which will lead them directly to the kingdom of heaven. The apostle (we may observe) is very earnest in his exhortation to this purpose; *We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother who walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us.* And again; *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; be ye not therefore partakers with them.* Care must be taken to avoid the company of such offenders, we must even run out of it if we cannot otherwise decline it, lest whilst we join our selves to such as walk disorderly, and follow them in their various wandrings and deviations, we also swerve from the way of truth, and entangle our selves in the guilt of their transgression. There is but one God, and one Christ, one church,

2 Theff. 3. 6.

Ephes. 5. 6, 7.

Some have fallen from the faith.] *Exciderunt a fide*; which is somewhat more emphatical than our common reading *quiescerunt* have not believed; or than the reading of the Alexandrian MS. *quiescentes* have not been obedient.

one

one faith, and one entire body of christian people, united to each other by the cement of a mutual concord: Now unity will not consist with division; nor will one body endure to have its bowels torn, or the continuity of its parts broken. Whatsoever shall be separated from the fountain of life, can have no life remaining in it, after having lost all communication with its vital principle. The Holy Spirit of God hath well admonished us, saying; *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.* He therefore who would be thought one of the children of peace, should seek and should follow after it: He who is acquainted with the bonds of charity, and is desirous of maintaining it, should refrain his tongue from the mischiefs of contention. Our blessed Lord, when his passion was near approaching, left it to us, amongst other excellent and wholsom lessons; *Peace (saith he) I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.* This is then the blessed inheritance which our Lord hath bequeathed to us, and all his promises are suspended upon this condition; wherefore if we claim to be heirs of Christ, let us abide in his peace; if we pretend to be the children of God, we should be lovers of peace: *Blessed (saith Christ) are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.* The children of God should therefore, I say, be careful to answer their character; should be meek in heart, open and innocent in their conversation, like-minded one towards another, and united together by the bonds of a mutual agreement and love. This was the state of the church under the apostles; thus did the first converts to our holy religion observe the commandments of Christ, and maintain with each other the law of charity. And thus the holy scripture saith of them; *That the multitude of them who believed were of one heart, and of one soul.* And again; *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* And to this was in great measure owing the success of their prayers; therefore they might ask with confidence whatever they stood in need of at the throne of grace.

20. But now amongst us the spirit of unity is very much broken, and with it that of charity is much weakened also; formerly they sold their lands and houses, and purchased for themselves a treasure in heaven, giving the price of them to be disposed of by the apostles for the use of the poor: The case at present is so far altered, that we do not so much as expend upon these occasions the tythe of our possessions; but instead of selling what we have, as

A. D. 351.

Psal. 34. 12, 13. 14.

John 14. 27.

Matt. 5. 9.

Acts 4. 31.

Acts 1. 14.

S. 20.

The state of the church at this time declining.

[United to each other.] The common point in which the members of any particular church were united to each other was the bishop; for this we shall find to have been our author's notion of a particular church, that it was a people united to their bishop, and a flock adhering to its proper pastor. In epist. to Pupianus. No 66. (Bp. Fell.) So the whole catholic church was one body of bishops, clergy and people, united to each other by the cement of a mutual concord; which concord had then known ways whereby it was expressed; such as letters of communion from bishop to bishop, mutual acknowledgements, actual communion, in case of passing from place to place, and in the mean time a common agreement in the main articles of christian faith, signified from one bishop to another by letters; rejecting those who were censured in one church from communion in any other, till the cause should be synodically determined, &c.

[The tythe of our possessions.] i. e. Our righteousness is so far in this kind from exceeding that of the Scribes and Pharisees, that it doth not come up to it. It is strongly hence suggested by our author, that in his opinion that proportion for the uses of piety and charity was too scanty. Could any rate be fixed upon as an unalterable and universal rule, this of the tythe, or tenth, hath more to be said for it than any other. Abraham, we find paying it before the law. Genes. 14. 18. and Jacob, Gen. 28. 22. Diverse heathen writers mention it; Herodotus, Thucydides, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Justin, Cicero, and others. Among the fathers Irenaeus speaks of it. b. 4. c. 27, in the same terms with our author, as if the gospel had rather extended than contracted the legal obligation. And Origen in numb. c. 18. is for a literal observation of this rule; and (not to mention the numerous citations which might be produced from the Post-nicene fathers to this purpose) our author in his first epistle argues from the original appointment of it to its reception in his own time. (Bp. Fell.) Upon the whole it is hard to conceive, that there should have been such a general concurrence of testimonies to a tenth proportion, without supposing it to have obtained very soon after the creation, and thence to have been spread into

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A. D. 251. our Lord directed us, we enlarge our estates by continual purchases. And are the firmness and alacrity of our faith indeed thus decayed and withered? The ghostly strength of believers thus weakened and enervated? Well might our Lord, in respect to such times as these, observe and ask in his gospel; *When the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* We see the case stands as he foretold it would: In any fear of God, in any regard to the law of righteousness, in any proofs of brotherly love, in any works of charity, there are no marks of such a faith appearing; no one seems to have any apprehensions upon him of futurity, nor of the wrath of God, which is to be revealed from heaven, in the great and terrible day of his coming; nor of that dreadful punishment which awaits unbelievers; nor of those eternal torments which are reserved for the betrayers of their faith. It were impossible we should not be afraid of these things, if we in earnest believed them; we do not therefore fear them, because we do not indeed believe them; if we did believe them, we could not but beware of them; and if we did beware of them, we should certainly escape them. Let us then rouse up the powers of our vigilance and virtue, my beloved brethren; let us lay aside all sloth and drowsiness, and be intent upon our obedience to our Master's orders. Let us be such as he would have us, and hath directed us to be; saying, as he doth in his gospel; *Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and ye your selves like unto men, who wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom our Lord when he cometh shall find watching.* We therefore, my brethren, should have our loins thus girded; lest when the day of our removal into another world shall approach us, we be found unfit for motion, and engaged in a variety of foreign occupations. Our light should shine forth in works of charity, that so we may be led by it out of the darkness of this world, into the glorious light of a better life. We should look out with an holy vigilance for the coming of our Lord, which, we are told before-hand, will be sudden; that when he knocketh, he may find us waking and watching for him, and may reward our faith and diligence with the glories of his kingdom. If we observe these directions, and obey these commands of our Lord and Master, the devil will find no opportunity to surprize or hurt us (thus armed against him) by any of his stratagems; but we shall be numbred with the diligent and faithful servants of Christ; and as such shall be admitted to reign with him in his kingdom.

to distant countries. A ninth or eleventh, some variety in a thing which looks so arbitrary, would in all likelihood have prevailed in different places, and among persons whose other manners and customs were so different, if a tenth had not proceeded from some common original, and thence been diffused throughout succeeding generations. How the revenues hence arising were disposed of, see note [the poor of the church] in §. 4. of the case of the lapsed.

Of

*Of the CASE of the LAPSED; or such as had
been prevailed with in time of persecution to sa-
crifice to idols, to deny, or to fall off, from the
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.*

Upon the death of Decius, who was lost in a morass towards the latter end of the year 251, in the month of November, the church of Christ was soon and gradually restored to peace, and the persecution, which was promoted by his edicts and authority, was presently ended. During so sharp a tryal, many, we may be sure, had yielded to the force of the temptation, and had forsook their religion, which could not be adhered to without very great difficulties and dangers. Now there were three principal ways of denying, or sneaking from the profession of the christian faith; to each of which the following tract will be found alluding.

1. By purchasing certificates of the magistrate, signifying, that the purchasers had sacrificed, or done what was required of them, in testimony of their communion with the Gentile worship; tho' they had really done no such matter; these were called libellatici, i. e. Men who had received such certificates, or else who had signed certain papers, signifying that they were worshippers of the heathen deities.
2. By offering frankincense to the heathen deities, or eating of the victims offered in sacrifice; these were called sacrificati, or thurificati; i. e. Men who had offered frankincense, or sacrifice.
3. By adding to the former practices, a direct abjuration of the name of Christ, and blaspheming his person and religion; these were called apostates.

In these several ways, diverse persons had offended, during the time of the Decian persecution; which had so scattered the members of the church, that there was no opportunity of consulting in common, what to determine upon the case of such as had thus lapsed; whether upon any, or upon what, if upon any, terms they should be received to communion. Some were very earnest to be forthwith admitted, without any previous penance; and were forwarded in their importunate pretensions by Novatus and his party, and some what unwarily by the martyrs and confessors themselves, who granted tickets, intimating their desires, that such and such, as were therein named, should be received immediately. St. Cyprian, whilst the persecution raged, fenced with these difficulties as well as he could, by advising these warm and hasty expectants to stay, till there should be an opportunity of determining this affair by some common concert, and he stood his ground with great constancy and firmness till the persecution was over; and was neither awed by the authority of martyrs nor confessors, nor overborn by the importunity of those who desired a speedy reconciliation, nor yet intimidated by the intrigues of faction and schism, to do any thing in this affair, till it could be solemnly considered, and decided in a council. 'Tis very probable, that he composed the substance

* Signed certain papers.] See note [scandalous subscriptions] in §. 3. ep. 30.

A. D. 251.

of this treatise, whilst the cause was pro and con debated, before the death of Decius, and published it with some alterations presently after. Before it, there had been frequent assemblies upon this occasion, of those who were upon the spot, as there had been some abatement of the rigour of the persecution, whilst the Emperor was at a distance with his army; in which time St. Cyprian had returned to his charge from his retirement, and in some of those assemblies might probably enough have recited the most part of this treatise; but as soon as ever the Emperor's death was known, and the scattered members of the church had full liberty of returning to their respective habitations, this affair was more solemnly determined, and this treatise, which had been read in the African council, was dispatched to Rome; as the reader may observe from the livth epistle of our author. The effect was, That our author's opinion took place, both in his own, and the Roman church; from which Novatian, when he had been baffled in his pretensions upon that bishoprick, took occasion of commencing a new schism; alledging, that the lapsed should upon no terms have been admitted, and that the church which admitted them was her self defiled and unchurched thereby. And yet his friend Novatus, a little before, whilst the persecution continued, was for admitting them immediately, without insisting upon any conditions. Their business was at any rate to make a breach, so that whether the lapsed had been admitted, or refused, Novatian, in all likelihood, would have taken the opposite side, and would have found some colour or other for the support of his schism. The reader from hence, and from the epistles of our author relating to this affair, will receive a very clear information of the discipline then obtaining with regard to sinners, and of the terms whereupon they were re-admitted into the church.

§. 1.
A pious congratulation of our author's to the church of Christ, upon the restoration of peace and liberty.

ALL H.E. church, we see, my beloved brethren, hath once more peace restored to her; and though her desponding sons considered it as an event, extremely improbable, and her false ones pronounced it utterly impossible; yet through the assistance of God to his servants, and by his just judgments upon their enemies, the profession of our religion is now no longer dangerous; wherefore our minds are now again overspread with a general satisfaction, and the clouds which threatened such a formidable storm being at length dispersed, there is a new light spring up for us, and our prospect throughout is clear and inviting. Praise and thanks be ascribed to God, for this, and for all his benefits! Nor were we wanting, indeed, to give him the honour due to his name, even in the midst of the persecution, and under its hottest assaults: For tis impossible our enemy should have so much power over us, as to hinder the sincere and hearty lovers of God from celebrating his praises at all times, and in all places: The happy expected day is come to all our wishes, wherein, after the dismal terrors of a long and thick darkness, the glorious light of the gospel is now at liberty to shine upon the world, with a full and undiminished lustre.

§. 2.
The various honours and triumphs of her confessors.

2. We look with pleasure upon those happy persons, who have derived immortal honour upon themselves by the confession of their blessed master's name in a time of danger; we deservedly admire the steadfastness of their faith and virtue, we embrace them with ardent affections, and salute them with the religious kiss of peace and charity. Behold then this unsported company of soldiers, serving under the captain of our salvation, breaking the force of their enemy, and weakening the fiercest assaults of persecution by their firmness and constancy, and their readiness to undergo imprisonment, or even death it self, for the sake of Christ. Hail gallant conquerors! You have made

the just judgments of God, the death of the *Devil*, who were the great promoters of the persecution. a noble

a noble stand against all the endeavours of the secular powers, to seduce you from your duty; you have exhibited a spectacle every way worthy of your maker's notice, and of your brethren's imitation! Your lips have scorned to deny their religious testimony to Christ in the day of trial, on whom they had solemnly before professed to believe! Your hands, which had been used to no work but God's, refused to assist at the profane altars of the *Gentiles*! Your mouths which had been sanctified with the food of heaven, and with the body and blood of your Saviour, would not, after that, defile themselves with the impure remains of meat offered to idols! You suffered not that superstitious veil to be cast over your heads, wherewith the slavish heads of those who offer sacrifice in the gentile worship are customarily covered: Your foreheads, which had remained unblemished from their first signature with the mark of Christ, could not afterwards endure a garland of satan's, but reserved themselves for an heavenly crown. With what joy and ecstacy doth the church, your mother, receive you to her bosom, upon your successful return from this glorious conflict! With what eulogies and gratulations doth she open wide her gates to you, that you may enter together in a full body, bringing back with you from the field of battle the trophies of your victory? Nor is your triumphal march without the attendance and company even of the weaker sex, which hath born its part in your conflict, and thereby hath proved itself a conqueror of its own natural timidity: Nor have the virgins of the church been wanting to join with you, nor to double the glory of your successful conflict with the lusts of the flesh, by the additional honour of contending in another way with their ghostly adversary, and of proving themselves in both to have been more than conquerors; nay even children themselves have surpassed upon this occasion the natural courage of their years, and have exhibited proofs of an uncommon virtue. Therest, who in great numbers have stood their ground, are in some measure entitled to a participation of your glory, and accordingly follow close upon you, and claim their share in your deserved applauses. The sincerity of their faith was the same as yours. They as well as you were too firmly built upon our most holy faith, and had too great a regard for the precepts of the gospel, to be removed from the one or from the other, by any dangers to which they were exposed, of banishment, confiscation, or corporal punishment. The day was set for them, which was to be the test of their faith and constancy; but he who remembers that he hath renounced the world, takes no cognizance or notice of any day

Solemnly before. Vix. at baptism.

Superstitious veil. As the *Gentile* worship consisted much of religious honours paid to dead men, so those honours were usually paid by persons whose heads were veiled, which was the customary way of solemnizing funeral rites. And whereas our author calls the heads so veiled, *slavish heads*, he refers to it as a note of servility. Accordingly we may observe from *Livy's* first book, that whoever was to undergo a servile punishment, had his head first covered. He makes the father of *Horatius*, who was upon trial for his life, say ironically to the executioner, *I hinc collige manes, quos paulo ante armati imperium populo Romano pepererunt. I caput obnubis liberatoris urbis, &c.* Bp. Fell.

First signature. See note on §. 16. of the 1st book of testimonies, and §. 15. on the unity of the church; to which I would here add, that the signature of the cross upon the forehead of believers at their baptism, had reference to a mercantile custom, in those times well known, of sealing parcels of goods with the purchaser's seal, till they should be taken out of the possession of the person from whom they were bought. In allusion to which, the Holy Spirit of God is said to seal us unto the day of redemption. *Ephes. i. 13.* To purchase us (as it were) out of confinement to the bondage of corruption, the service of the devil; and to set his mark upon us in the interim, till the full redemption of his purchased possession. And thus the servants of God are represented sealed in their foreheads. *Revelat. 7. 3.* Perhaps with a farther allusion to this custom at baptism, which, it is not improbable, had obtained even in those times, since we are sure it obtained very soon after.

Stand their ground. *Stantissimi multitudine.* i. e. They who had not lapsed, without being brought to any personal or particular trial; for there were great temptations upon all (as well upon those who were not particularly cited, as those who were) to desert christianity. And some accordingly went in of their own accord, and offered to sacrifice without being called upon to do so. What follows in this §. shews moreover, that a day was set for all christians in general to come in, and shew their religion; so that whoever came not in, before the expiration of the time so set, had some title to the praise of a confessor, as thereby exposing himself to the penalties in that case denounced.

Renounced the world. Here our author alludes to the baptismal renunciations of the world.

which

A. D. 251. which the powers of the world shall set to him. Nor is he mindful of any reckonings of time which are thence computed, who duly considers that eternity which is the great object of his hope in God. Let no one then, I beseech you, endeavour to diminish or detract from the honours due to those who have stood their ground with this degree of constancy and courage: The moment whereupon the day which had been set to them expired, made them confessors; retaining, as they did, their integrity, without flinching from it, in such a dangerous juncture. 'Tis acknowledged that the highest applauses are due to those, who being in the hands of their heathen enemies, adventured to make a solemn confession of the christian faith. Yet surely they stand in the next degree of commendation, who by a wary retreat have reserved themselves for the farther service of their master. The one is indeed a more *publick* confession, but the other should not be deprived of the honour of a *private* one. The one overcomes, 'tis true, a judge of this world; whereas the other propounds to it self no other judge but God alone, and accordingly is careful to keep a conscience void of all offence. In one case there is the greater manifestation of firmness and courage; in the other, of an holy solicitude and jealousy. In the one, a man, when his hour is come, is found prepared, and fit for it; in the other, he is indeed reprieved and respite, tho perhaps for a season only; it is however a fair and reasonable presumption, that he, who was content to leave his estate and fortune, lest he should have been tempted to deny his religion, would have bravely made a confession of it, if he had been forced to abide the trial.

§. 3.
That the case
of the lapsed
was a very
sad one.

But amidst all our triumphs and gratulations, for the crowns of our martyrs, and for the honours which our confessors have gained by their glorious achievements, and for the unshaken firmness of the rest of our brotherhood, we have this sad abatement of our joy; that the enemy hath torn out a part of our bowels from us, and in the heat of this fierce engagement, hath made some fatal inroads upon the flock of Christ. What then is there left for me, my beloved brethren, either to say, or do, under such a variety of sentiments and passions, as crowd into my mind upon this sad occasion? Tears will better express my concern than any words can do, for this grievous wound inflicted upon our body, and for this lamentable diminution of our numbers, by the force or fraud of our enemy. For who is there amongst us who hath so hard an heart, or so little affected with christian charity, as to stand unmoved amidst the ruins of his brethren, or to look with dry eyes upon the various miseries of the few who are left behind them; and not rather to express the first emotions of his mind in sighs and tears, than to form them into words, or to utter them in vocal sounds? I condole with you, my brethren, and my bowels yearn towards you; nor is it any mitigation of my grief, to reflect upon my own particular innocence or safety; since a good shepherd always laments when any of his flock are wounded. Accordingly, in heart and in affection I am closely linked to each of you; the weight of your sorrows, and the desolation of our common family, lie heavy upon my spirits, and are ready to overwhelm me. With them who mourn I mourn also, *I weep with them who weep*; and I imagine my self in the same condition with them who are *fallen*; those darts of the enemy which flew so thick amongst the flock, pierced my bowels when any of my flock were hurt by them; the assaults of the persecution tormented my mind continually, tho they could not

Rom. 12. 15.

To diminish the honours.] Those who had actually *lapsed* were forward to urge in their own vindication, that the *flaminius* multitude, i. e. they who were not particularly and personally called upon to redouble the faith of Christ, would have done it upon any such special summons; and so have been in an equal degree of guilt with the *lapsed* themselves. Our author therefore endeavours to guard against this subtlety, and to represent the case of the *flaminius*, equal almost to that of the *confessors*; since they obeyed the powerful orders to come in by such a day, and renounce the christian faith, and therefore stood exposed to all the penalties of a more direct and avowed confession. Some reference he might likewise make to his own case, who withstanding himself, and was, as he had said before, *referred for the further service of his church*; but he does not. He has our author's words, *He has said before, referred for the further service of his church*. *Viz.* the *lapsed*; they whose *fall* in the persecution gave occasion to this tract.

reach

reach my body; and sympathy made me a sufferer, in each advantage gained over any of my brethren. A.D. 151.

4. We may not however, my dearest friends, dissemble the truth; nor should we suffer our reflections upon the darkness and horror of the late calamity so far to possess or to blind our thoughts, as to shut out the light of heavenly instruction. If we can find out the cause of our misfortune, we shall the better be enabled to heal up the wound which hath been given by it. Our Lord and Master had a mind to prove us; and as a long continuance of peace and security, had relaxed the vigour of that holy discipline which was delivered to us from above; it grew necessary thence, to awaken our sluggish faith, and to rouse up our dormant principles by some smart dispensation of providence; and when our sins had merited a much sorer punishment, our merciful and indulgent Lord so tempered its severity, that whatever hath passed, had more the face of a trial, than of a persecution. All were set upon an unmeasurable increase of gain; and forgetting how the first converts to our holy religion had behaved under the personal direction and care of our Lord's apostles, or how all ought in after-times to carry themselves; their love of money was their darling passion, and the master-spring of all their actions. The religion of the clergy slackened and decayed; the faith of priests and deacons grew languid and unactive; works of charity were discontinued, and an universal licence and corruption prevailed every where, and had tainted all ranks and orders of men amongst us. Those of our sex had *marred the corners of their beards*, [contrary to a direct precept of the *Levitical law*, and as a token moreover of too great a delicacy in their manners and dispositions!] Those of the other sex had made for themselves a beauty, which God and nature did never design for them; those eyes which were formed by the hand of God, had another fashion given them afterwards by the hands of men; their hair was dyed; and all arts, all endeavours, were made use of, to catch the hearts and the affections of the innocent, and unwary; frequent intermarriages were made with *unbelievers*, and the members of Christ were by these means prostituted to heathens! Not only rash oaths, but even perjuries were rife and common; an haughty contempt of ecclesiastical rulers had generally prevailed; mutual contentions and revilings had spread their poison far and near; diverse bishops, who should have taught others better, both by their example and persuasion, neglecting their high trust and their commission from above, entered upon the management of secular affairs; and leaving their chair, and their charge with it, strolled about from place to place, in different provinces, upon mercantile business, and in quest of an ignominious gain. And thus the poor of the church were miserably neglected, whilst the bishops, who should have taken care of them, were intent upon nothing but their own private profit, which they were forward to advance at any rate, and by any, even the foulest, methods. What

§. 4.
That the corruption of manners among christians was the cause of these calamities befalling them.

Levit. 19. 27.

2 Cor. 6. 14.

[Long continuance of peace.] In 38 years from the Emperor Severus to Diocles, the church had been undisturbed by any persecution; for what Maximian attempted in that interval, affected only the clergy of a few particular churches, and reached not to Africa. Bishop Eusebius.

[Marred the corners of their beards.] Left the reader should be surprized at finding this objected as an instance of the general prevailing corruption, I have added a few words by way of explication to it: See moreover this scripture cited and noted in §. 8. p. of the 3d book of Testimonies.

[The poor of the church.] How solicitous St. Paul was upon this article, his epistles are ample proofs. And Justin Martyr hath told us in Apol. 2. That the oblations of the faithful were disposed with the bishop, who, out of them, provided for all the sick and needy within his diocese; for widows, orphans, prisoners, strangers, and all who laboured under any necessity or affliction. And how solicitous our author was always upon this affair, his epistles likewise give us copious proof, especially his 61d; where a great sum appears to have been distributed by him upon one of these occasions; which will be noted in its proper place. (Bishop Fell.) §. 2. The revenue of the church, as well whilst they consisted only of voluntary oblations, as when afterwards lands were added to them, were divided into four parts; one of which was allotted to the support of the bishop and his family; another to his clergy; a third to the poor and strangers; and a fourth to the repairs of his church and manse. And an economist, or steward, was appointed, in process of time, for each episcopal church; who was to take an account of the bishop's private patrimony, and upon his decease to see it distributed to his family, as the law required; and to reserve for the uses of the church and of his successor, what should appear to have been the goods of the church.

A. D. 25. f. measures of punishment could now be thought too severe for such raging provocations? Especially when the word of God had already denounced his judgments against such as should disobey him: *If they shall forsake my law, and will not walk in my judgments; if they shall break my statutes, and will not keep my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.* These things have been told us beforehand, and we have had a fair warning given us; but we, regardless of the law and of all obedience to it, have brought things to such a pass by our manifold offences, that since we would not hearken by *fair means* to the precepts of our Lord and Master, he hath now resorted to *rougher measures*; and thus hath at once corrected our misdeeds, and tried the firmness of our faith, by a *judicial process*. Nor yet did we turn unto him, even when it was so very late; nor did we endure, as we should have done, with due courage and constancy, his *chastisement* nor his *proof* of us. As soon as ever the enemy threw out his menaces, a great number of our brethren betrayed their trust, and revolted from the faith of Christ; it was not here the force of the persecution, which sunk them; but they fell of their own accord, before any violence offered them; and so contracted the guilt of a chosen and unconstrained apostacy.

S. 5.
That there-
fore their lapse
was utterly
inexcusable.

Matt. 4. 10.

Deut. 6. 13.

Isai. 2. 8, 9.

Exod. 22. 20.

5. What, I beseech you, could be the new, unexpected, unforeseen incident which tempted these men to depart so suddenly from their obligations to Christ and his religion? Have not the prophets, and the apostles after them, apprized us of these things beforehand? Have not persons inspired by the Holy Ghost foretold to us the sufferings of good men, and the injurious treatment they should meet with from heathen hands? Is not the holy scripture full of encouragements to us to persevere in the profession of our faith, exhorting and persuading us to *worship the Lord our God, and him only to serve*? Hath it not denounced the wrath of God against such as *worship that which their own fingers have made*; against the man who *so boweth down*, and the great man who *so humbleth himself*, saying in the name of God, *I will not forgive them*. Do we not read moreover of God himself proclaiming and threatening, *He that sacrificeth unto any God, save unto the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed*? Afterwards in the gospel, do we not find our blessed Lord, who in his *discourses* was a *preacher* of that righteousness, whereof in his *actions* he was a *punctual practiser*, thus directing us by the two-fold guidance of precept and example: (Do we not find him, I say) foretelling to us as well the present as future transactions; what is *now* doing, and what we have yet *farther* to expect? Hath he not denounced an everlasting punishment to such as shall deny him, and promised an eternal reward to such as shall confess him? Some (to their shame and scandal be it ever remembered!) have no more regarded all this, than if it had never been declared to them. They did not stay to have the question put to them before they denied their Lord and Saviour; they did not wait for the formality of being apprehended, but advanced of their own accord to the place of sacrifice. These were not overcome upon the *stress* of the engagement, but *before* it; not by *dint* of force, but without *any* offered to them: Nor did they leave to themselves the satisfaction of reflecting, that they were *constrained* to sacrifice against their wills; no! they ran upon their ruin, like men who *before* were fond of it, and greedily *now* laid hold of the occasion, which they had *all along* desired to meet with. What shall we say of those whose case, upon night coming on, the magistrates would have put off till the morrow, but that they were prevented by their importunities, ^{own} urging them to their

^a Urging them. The People, who were before the magistrate upon account of their religion, desired their case might forthwith be determined, that they might be at liberty to give immediately the expected proofs of their renouncing christianity: They were so impatient to be thus undone,

own destruction? What violence can such a man pretend in mitigation of his guilt to have been offered him, when all the violence proceeded indeed from the importunity of his own desires, that he might with the soonest be permitted to undo himself? When he thus voluntarily advanced to the ° capitol in pursuance of his flagitious and wicked purpose; did he not perceive, I would ask him, his limbs to tremble, his eye-sight to fail him, and was not his whole frame disconcerted with the shocking design? Were not his senses stupified? Did not his speech falter, and his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth? How was it possible for a servant of God, who had solemnly renounced the world and the devil, to stand afterwards and renounce Christ? Was not the altar, at which he thus prostituted his conscience, considered by him as a sort of funeral pile to him? Should he not, as such, have fled from it with the utmost abhorrence, fuming, as usually it does, with noysom stinks and filthy exhalations? Unhappy wretch! Wherefore dost thou take the needless pains of carrying thither a victim with thee to sacrifice? Thou art, thy self, that victim! Thou makest a sacrifice of thine own soul! Thou hast offered up at this altar thy own salvation, and thy faith and hope are consumed in its fatal fires.

A. D. 251.

6. Nor were very many content with destroying *themselves* only; but a great multitude of People conspired to undo *one another* by mutual exhortations, and by reciprocal persuasions: They pledged each other in the fatal cup, which carried certain ruin to those who drank of it; and, that nothing might be wanting to fill up the measure of their guilt, their harmless children were taken along with them to bear them company in this woful work, and so forfeited in their childhood the privileges to which their baptism had entituled them soon after their birth. May they not plead with great justice in the day of judgment to the following purpose? "We have committed no crime in our own persons, we did not willingly leave the food of Christ, nor his cup of blessing, to be polluted by a profane communion: Our misfortune ariseth from another's treachery, and our parents themselves have most unnaturally contributed with impious hands to our destruction. They denied the church to be our mother, and God to be our father; and thus through the unwaryness and incapacity of our tender years, and not understanding the importance nor the consequence of the horrid action, we were unwittingly made partakers of other people's sins, and undone through a treachery to which we never knowingly consented."

§. 6.

That their crime was foulest who had tempted others into the like offence.

7. Nor

(ruined in their spiritual concerns) that they would not wait for the chances which the morrow might have brought along with it for their escape; so that the aggravation of their crime was their forwardness in it.

° *Capitol.*] It hath already been observed in note upon the book to *Donatus*, §. 9. [*twelve famous tables*] that Roman colonies preserved their Roman customs in the places to which they were transplanted. Hence we have the names of *twelve tables*, *forum*, *capitol*, &c. at *Carthage*, as at *Rome*. N. B. The capitol was the place of solemn sacrifice, and, as it stood upon an hill, our author had before in this §. alluded to it, in that situation, where he blamed those who would not wait for the formality of being apprehended before they advanced or ascended to it. *Non expectaverunt ut ascenderent apprehensi.*

¶ *Renounced the world and the devil.*] It hath been before observed (in note on §. 5. of the *habis of virgins*) what solemn renunciations were used at baptism; and to these our author here alludes.

¶ *The fatal cup.*] This alludes to the libations, the liquid sacrifices in use among the heathens: concerning which St. Paul had before said, *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils.* 1 Cor. 10. 21. Bp. Fell.

¶ *So forfeited.*] As far as their parents act could avail to make them forfeit it; the parents did all they could towards such a forfeiture, and it should seem indeed that our author thought the parents act as valid to the children's disadvantage, in bringing them to the heathen sacrifices, as it had been to their advantage, in bringing them to the christian sacraments: But this, I presume, we are rather to consider as a rhetorical aggravation of the parent's crime, than as strict reasoning upon the fate of such children.

¶ *Soon after their birth.*] See note [all here assembled, &c.] in §. 2. epist. 64. They lost that in their childhood which they got in the first moments of their lives. These words are our author's literally translated, which doubtless referred to the baptism of infants; and it is evident from our author's epistle to *Fidus* (No 64.) that the church of his time was no stranger to that practice. And even *Tertullian's* argument against it, and his question put, *Why should that innocent age be in such haste for the remission of its sins?*

In

A. D. 251.

§. 7.

The pretences
considered for
palliating
their guilt.And, 1. The
love of one's
country, and
longing to re-
turn to it.

Isai. 52. 11.

Revelat. 18. 4.

Matt. 10. 23.

§. 8.

2. The regard
to one's estate
and fortune.

7. Nor is there at last any great or weighty reason to be offered in excuse or mitigation of so foul a conduct; they were indeed forced to leave their country, and some diminution of their estate and fortune was thence unavoidable. And who, I pray, is there coming into the world, or going out of it, but who must likewise submit to these inconveniences, and at one time or other must leave behind him his estate and country? But then to prevent the consequence of forsaking Christ, he should dread the loss of his interest and treasure in heaven. The holy scripture is very warm and copious in its persuasives to us, saying; *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her: Be ye clean, who bear the vessels of the Lord.* And shall not they then retire out of the noise and pollution of the world, who are, themselves, those vessels of the Lord, and his declared temples, for fear of being forced to touch the unclean thing, and to taste the baneful food which is offered to idols, and to profane their consciences with the guilt of such an horrid action? Elsewhere we may likewise hear a voice from heaven, forewarning God's people how to behave in such trying junctures, and saying, *Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Where we may observe, that he who comes out of her, and retires, escapes the participation of her sins; as again he receives of her plagues, who is found partaker of her sins. Wherefore our blessed Lord hath advised us, in times of persecution to give way, and to fly; he hath prescribed to us this conduct, and encouraged us to make use of it: For as the crown of martyrdom is a peculiar favour and gift of God, and no one can attain to it, till his hour is come; he who abides in Christ, and retreats in the intermediate season, ought not to be censured as denying Christ, but as waiting only till his time shall come: Whereas he who hath not retired, and is foiled in the encounter, stayed behind, one would think, on purpose to deny his Master.

8. We ought not, my brethren, to disguise the truth, nor to conceal the real occasion and rise of our present misfortune. Many of us were blindly attached to our estates and interests; nor is it then any wonder that such should not be light enough, nor in readiness for their march, who were detained and entangled by their riches, as it were by heavy baggage: These were the chains which had tyed down those who stayed behind with them; had fet-

in his book of baptism, is an undoubted proof that custom was against him, and that the church of his time did really baptize her infants. Irenaeus saith (b. 2. c. 39.) that Christ came to save all, by himself; i. e. All, who thro' him are born again (viz. baptized) unto God; of all ages; infants, children, youth; full grown persons, and old ones. And Origen gives this reason for baptizing children, because the corruption derived from their birth is purged away by it; Homil. 14. in Luke. And again; For this reason the church of Christ received it as a tradition from the apostles to baptize children; since they, in whom the dispensation of the mysteries of Christ was committed, knew full well that all had a taint of original corruption, and therefore stood in need of having it washed away by baptism, in Rom. b. 5. c. 6. Nor could Rufinus easily be supposed to palm this passage upon Origen, with whom he took indeed great liberties, where he had occasion to defend his favourite author from some imputations; but here, I say, he had no such occasion; since it never made any part of Origen's accusations, that he was against infant-baptism, and therefore Rufinus could have no temptation thence to represent him as a friend to it, if he were really not so; nor to coin any passages for him to that purpose. Nor is there any more reason for the children of christians being excluded from the privileges of a covenant, than for the children of Jews, who were certainly admitted to it. And if the christian be a continuation of the Jewish church, only reformed, (as it might be easy to prove it) their infants must have a title to the covenant, except specially excluded. And 'tis pretty certain that the Jewish proselytes who were baptized before they were admitted into their church, had their children baptized with them. So that there was no opinion in our Saviour's time of children's incapacity for a covenant. And as he took this ceremony from them, he would certainly have specified his design to exclude children, if he had really designed their exclusion. A commission now given to any person to disciple people to Christ, by baptism, must needs be understood to mean their children with them; because it is now the known practice; and so was then; and therefore the form of the commission not excluding children, can be understood no otherwise, than as admitting them.

[Depart.] Here our author touches a little upon his own case, who had retired in the heat of the persecution, and reserved himself for the farther service of the church. He is obviating the objections which thence might be started against his conduct. Bishop Fell.

[Intermediate season.] Viz. between that of the actual persecution, and of his hour coming, which was precisely our author's case.

[Heavy baggage.] Truly some where hath called riches *impedimenta virtutis*. And lord Bacon hath observed upon it, that tho' heavy baggage be necessary to an army, yet it hinders their march.

tered

tered and overborn the several powers of their faith and virtue; had laid a restraint upon their spirits, and bound down their very souls to them. Thus with their affections devoted to earthly lusts, they became a very proper prey to the serpent; a beast, which by the just judgment of God was long ago appointed to feed upon the dust of the earth. Upon these considerations our blessed Lord hath well advised us for our interest and advantage, of which he hath the direction and disposal; *If (said he) thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, and follow me.* Would rich men be persuaded to go into this measure, their riches would not prove so fatal to them; if they would lay up their treasure in *heaven*, it would not prove to them *at home* such a pernicious enemy; if their treasure were indeed in *heaven*, their hearts and their affections would be there with it. The world would never be found too hard for them, if they had no concern in it of weight enough to attach them to it; they would then follow their Master without incumbrance or distraction, as the apostles did, and many after them, who leaving their families and their fortunes, devoted themselves entirely to Christ, and to his blessed gospel. But now in what manner can they be supposed to follow Christ, who are chained down as it were to their estates, and drag after them the weight of an unwieldy fortune? How can they be said to make for heaven, or to set their affections on things above; whose hearts are sensual and earthly, and bent downwards with an oppressive burden of worldly cares? They please themselves with an imagination that they *possess* great riches, whereas in the truth of things they are rather *possessed* by them. They are slaves to their wealth; and are so far from being *masters* of their *money*, that *money* is to all intents and purposes *their master*. To such a juncture as this, and to such men as these, the apostle unquestionably alluded, when he observed of those who *would be rich*, that they would *fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for that the love of money was the root of all evil; which whilst some had coveted after, they had made shipwreck of their faith, and entangled themselves in many sorrows.* But now how exceedingly great and precious are the promises which our Lord hath made, to take us off from all inordinate affection to worldly good? How amply, how abundantly, doth he propound to recompence us for any losses, to which his gospel may at present expose us? *There is no man (saith he) who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for the kingdom of God's sake; but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life.* Which things being known, and well assured to us from the express promises of unerring truth, losses of this kind which are so compensated, are rather *desirable*, than in any manner *formidable*; the same most gracious Master having given us this farther encouragement in the following words; *Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and shall separate you from their company, and shall cast you out, and shall reproach your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake; rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven.*

9. Well, but besides what hath hitherto been urged in excuse of their shameful lapse, these men, I foresee, will plead yet farther, that truly there were very grievous tortures prepared for such as should refuse compliance; and that the terror of them was too shocking and insupportable for human nature. Now this apology, I cannot but observe, would come from their mouths with far greater decency as well as reason, if they had actually felt those tortures, and found them upon tryal so grievous and insupportable. They might with some propriety derive their excuse from excess of pain, whom excess of pain

A. D. 251.

Gen. 3. 14.

Matt. 19. 21.

1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

Mark 10. 29.

30.

Luke 6. 12, 23.

5. 9.
3. The fear of
torments.

* *Made shipwreck, and entangled.* See what is observed in note on §. 61. of the 3^d book of Testimonies. I observe what was the process, and what had

A. D. 751. had indeed subdued and conquered. Such a man might be allowed to argue for himself, and to palliate his guilt, by the following considerations. "I was determined to make a push for it; I did not forget my obligations to my Lord and Master; but in pursuance of them I took up arms to defend my self; yet it was my unhappiness to fall in the encounter; flesh and blood were too weak to grapple with those punishments and tortures, which were severally applied to them: My mind was, however, true; my faith maintained a good while the contest, and it was long before I gave way to the force of my torments; but when the magistrate afresh attacked me, and renewed his cruelties upon my torn and harrassed body; when scourges, and clubs, and racks, and fire, and every engine and instrument of torture, made, all in their turns, their attempts upon me; the weakness of my flesh at length yielded, I sunk in the struggle through the mere infirmity of my nature, and though excess of pain quite conquered my body, yet in purpose of heart I was the same as ever." A cause (I say) thus pleaded, would have some compassion due to it; these are considerations which might go a great way towards obtaining a speedy pardon for the party alledging them. This was lately the case of *Castus* and *Emilius*, to whom we are confident that our gracious Lord hath vouchsafed his pardon; in their first encounter they were worsted, but in the second they approved themselves conquerors, through Christ, who strengthened them; and so the flames which once had mastered, were at length mastered by them, and their conqueror himself was in the conclusion conquered. Their manner of seeking pardon was not by tears but wounds; it was not the lamentable tone of their voice which pleaded for it so forcibly, but the agonies and torments of their mangled bodies; instead of tears they shed their blood, which flowed from their bowels, when half consumed in the flames, and was a more powerful advocate for them than any weeping or lamentation: But what wounds have they to shew whose case we are now considering? What gaps in their bowels, what mangling of their limbs can they pretend to, who stood no trial, who put their faith upon no test nor proof, but shamefully departed from it, without any endeavour, or any struggle to preserve it? Their crime was perfectly voluntary, nor have they any colour of necessity to palliate or excuse it.

§. 10. Nor do I mean by any thing I have said upon the case of our fallen brethren, to load it with undue aggravations; I would only persuade them to seek their peace in a proper manner, and to give the church a becoming satisfaction. For since we find it written, *They which call thee happy cause thee to err they disturb the way of thy paths*; certainly he who soothes up the sinner with flattering words, adds fuel to his lusts, multiplieth transgressions instead of lessening them, and is so far from laying them under any restraint or discouragement, that he abets and cherishes them by his mis-timed

Lord hath vouchsafed his pardon.] The ground of this belief, that our Lord had pardoned those persons, was their subsequent martyrdom after their former lapse. Now there was no more doubt of their salvation in the primitive church, who were *Lapsed* (as it was called) in their own blood, than of those who were baptized with water; all former sins were supposed remitted by both of them. (Bp. Fell.) Only according to our author's principles in his book of the unity of the church, it was necessary they should be baptized in the church, to make their baptism effectual, either by blood or water. As to the opinion of baptism by blood, our Lord himself had laid the foundation of that comparison, *Luk. 22. 20. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?* This was plainly the baptism of blood.

2. *Becoming satisfaction.* To greater and more satisfaction is fit, viz. Such intreaties as should be accompanied with penitential labours and austerities; for our author's main design in this book was not to deny the sinner all hope of peace and pardon, but only to keep them for sometime in a state of penitence, that they might give satisfaction (not to God, but) to his church, for the scandal of their former practice; and example to all from the difficulties of their obtaining pardon, to avoid any like offence.

3. *Disburying the Targum.* So the LXX, and so we read it in the margin of our bibles, though our English version hath it, *lead thee*, as the Syriac likewise reads it; the Arabic, *benefactor*, but the Hebrew agrees with the LXX.

4. *Disburying the Targum.* By the LXX; the Hebrew faiths swallow up, and our vulgar reads it, *destroy*. softness;

softness; whereas he who plies them with rougher medicines, and a coarser treatment, will be found to have assisted his brethren with useful counsel, and thereby will prove instrumental towards their salvation: *As many as I love* (saith our blessed Lord) *I rebuke and chasten*. A bishop therefore should follow the pattern set him by his great High-Priest, and so should not flatter the sinner with deceitful and soft expressions, but should go to the very bottom of his case, and should look out, not for palatable or pleasing, but for wholsom remedies. He would betray great ignorance of his profession, who for fear of putting his patient to pain, by opening of his wound, should softly handle it, and skin it over, and close it up, leaving it foul, and not cleansing it of the corruption lodged in it: For by this unskilful management 'tis plain the malignity would take deep root, and would taint the whole mass; wherefore the wound in all such cases must, we know, be opened, the knife must not be spared, and all superfluous excrescences must be cut off, without regard to the pain occasioned by so sharp a treatment. The patient, for the present, 'tis likely, will complain, and will cry out when hurt; but he will thank the operator afterwards, when he finds his recovery hath been owing to such a management. Thus, my brethren, it should be with us; we have a new mischief broken out amongst us, and, as if the storm of our late persecution had not done us sufficient damage, another evil is added to it, not likely to prove less fatal, though it approaches with a serener aspect, and under the colour of tenderness and compassion. Through the rashness of some in granting, and of others in asking; the terms of communion are become too easy, the reins of discipline are shamefully relaxed, in opposition to the vigour and firmness wherewith the whole tenor of the gospel, and the laws of God and Christ have commanded them to be held. In short, a delusive insignificant absolution is at random given, which will prove dangerous to the givers, and useless to the receivers. It is just in effect the very case I have mentioned; it is skinning over a mortal wound, and fixing the malignant humour upon the bowels, to prevent the pain which would arise from dislodging it. Thus leaving the figure, and returning to the truth of things, we may observe of people coming fresh from the altar of the devil, their hands yet reeking with the blood of the sacrifices offered thereupon, (we may observe, I say, of them) that they sail would approach the highest mysteries of our christian worship: even whilst the taste of the meat thus offered is yet fresh in their mouths, and their very breath continues tainted with its noisom exhalations; they would venture to feed upon the body of Christ, notwithstanding those passages of holy scripture which lie full in their teeth, and say: *All who are clean shall eat the flesh, but the soul which eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, which pertaineth unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people*. And again in the new testament; *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils*. Once more the same apostle hath denounced against the obstinate and incorrigible the following commination; *Whoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*. But now all these admonitions and precautions meet with nothing but contempt at our hands; in the very face, and in spite of them, we offer violence and outrage to the body and blood of Christ: Nor is indeed the intrusion of those to be interpreted as a less affront of our Lord and Saviour, who presume (unqualified) to receive the sacred elements into their hands and mouths, than that which they offered him before, when they directly denied and renounced him: before they have in any manner endeavoured to satisfy for their offence; before

A. D. 251.

Revelat. 3. 19.

Levit. 7. 19.
20.

1 Cor. 10. 21.

1 Cor. 11. 27.

^c Highest mysteries.] *Sanctum domini*, which without all doubt must mean the holy eucharist.

^d To satisfy, &c.] The satisfaction here made, it hath been observed before, in note [becoming satisfaction] was made to the church, and not to God. The purgation of their consciences follows, we see here, after this satisfaction. Here we may therefore observe what was the process, and what were the steps

A. D. 251. before they have made a solemn confession of it, before any notification of their pardon, by imposition of the bishop's hands, and thence their regular admission to the holy eucharist, before it is by any of these marks apparent that the anger of God against them is appeased; they are so weak as to imagine that *peace* is restored to them, because some few, as weak as themselves, and as unqualified to *give* it are forward enough to *promise* it. Whereas it is *war* indeed, and not *peace*, which is thus pronounced to them, nor can any man be *joined* to the church who is disjoined from the gospel; wherefore then do they misname things; to what purpose is it to call a mischief an advantage, or an instance of profaneness an act of religion? Wherefore then doth any man pretend or offer to communicate with those, and thereby to prevent their penitential sorrow, who ought to spend a great deal of their time in solemn lamentation and mourning, and in beseeching of God his compassion and mercy? All this indulgence is really no more beneficial to men, who have been so unhappy as to fall from their steadfastness, than tempestuous weather to the fruits of the earth; than the murrain to cattel; or a dreadful storm to the mariner: They who are so forward in dispensing it, subvert the only true foundation which the lapsed can have of any hope in God; they tear up (as it were) the tree from its proper root; their discourse is fatal and contagious, like poyson; their conduct resembles that of unskilful pilots, who instead of conducting their vessel safe into harbour, split it upon the rocks. The peace thus given by them, upon such easy terms, is so far from answering its genuine designs and purposes, that it directly thwarts them; so far from admitting the persons receiving it to the advantages of a just and regular communion, that 'tis really an additional stop to them in the way of their salvation. It amounts indeed to all the effects of a new and another persecution; 'tis a stratagem only of a different sort, whereby the great and subtle enemy of our souls, makes his attempts upon our brethren, who have fallen in the late grievous tryal; he would have them desist from all farther mourning and lamentation; he would wipe out of their hearts all remembrance of their passed offence, and all sorrow for it; it is none of his interest that they should deprecate the wrath of God, or pass thro' all the forms of a long and laborious penance: He knows, and therefore would have them forget that it is written, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent.*

Revel. 2. 5.

§. 11.

That none but
God can properly forgive
sins.

II. Let none impose upon, nor deceive themselves; no *mans* pity can here avail them. No one can pardon the sins committed against God, but he alone who bare our sins, who suffered for our sakes, and whom God delivered up for our offences. It is impossible that man should be greater than God, or equal to him; nor is it therefore within the power of *man*, who is the *servant*,

steps in those times necessary to the forgiveness of an heinous and scandalous sin. The church was to be satisfied; a solemn and publick confession was to be made of the offence; there was to be an imposition of hands from the bishop, in token of the peace of the church being restored to the party; and thus at last he was re-admitted to a participation of the holy mysteries; then, and not till then, the pardon of God was *supposed* to be given him. I observe moreover upon these satisfactions of the penitent, as given by him to the church in order to his pardon from God, that they always preceded his absolution; penance was not then (as now it is in the *Roman church*) assigned, and absolution immediately granted; upon supposal, that the penance, so assigned, would afterwards be submitted to. But the penance was first, I say, performed; which in the beginnings of the church took up less time, (there was but a year between the offence, and the restoration of the incestuous *Corinthian*, and but half a year, says *Billion* *Fell*, between the sin of the lapsed, and their absolution; nay if we suppose their crime to have continued from the very beginning of the *Decian* persecution, the whole transaction will be contained within three years;) but after the days of *Montanus* and *Novatus*, especially of the latter, the church was stricter in her regimen, and after the state came into the church, and an increase of vices with it, her discipline was extended to many years continuance; and there were thenceforward diverse stations and stages of penance; all which may be seen at one view in *Gregory Nyssen's* canonical epistle to *Leontius*, which is translated in *append. No. 1. to penitential Discipline*.

[Be joined to the church, &c.] In the former treatise of the *Unity of the Church*, our author had represented an unity of doctrine insignificant, without an unity of worship; and here he asserts unity of worship insignificant, without adhering to the unity of evangelical truth.

Man who is the servant to forgive. This whole business of the agency of man in the forgiveness of sin, is distinctly handled in chap. 2. part 1. §. 3. and in chap. 3. §. 4. of the *penitential discipline*; but

servant, to forgive in any case a sin of so deep a dye as this, which is committed against our common Lord and Master; and the unhappy offender who should in this case expect it, would only add to his other misfortune, the curse denounced by God, against such as should *trust in man*. Our Lord alone is here to be the object of his prayer; he alone is to be pacified by the penitent's humiliation; he, who hath peremptorily declared, that he will *deny* these who deny him, and who hath received *all judgment* from the Father. We are as willing as any can be, to make all fit allowances to the merits of martyrs, and to their interest in our righteous judge; but not till the day of judgment, when this world shall be brought to its appointed period, and all the people of Christ shall stand before his tribunal. For the rest; if there be any one so presumptuous as to imagine that he is privileged to give the peace of the church, or remission of sins, out of their proper course, and before their time, and so shall adventure to break in upon the rules of the gospel; he will be found to have done a great deal of harm, without any good, to the unhappy offenders. He who keeps not in this case to the rules of our Lord's appointing, will be found to have provoked his anger, and to have arrogated to himself the privilege of granting these men their pardon, as he shall happen to be tenderly or humorously disposed to them; when he should rather have put them upon deprecating in the first place God's wrath and vengeance.

17. *The souls of the saints who were slain for the word of God, are represented as crying with a loud voice from under the altar, and saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them who dwell on the earth? And it was said unto them, that they should have patience, and should rest yet for a little season: And can any man then imagine, that they have yet the privilege of forgiving, as they please, the sins of others, or that they may take upon them the patronage of other mens causes, before their own is sufficiently cleared and vindicated? Do the martyrs*

§. 12.
The proper
privilege of
martyrs sta-
ted and limi-
ted.
Rev. 6. 9, 10,
11.

there seems indeed to have been no settled rule as yet for admitting those to communion, who had been guilty of a sin committed peculiarly against God; and apostacy was eminently such. *Humiliation.* This indeed is called satisfaction; but, as was before noted, it was only in regard to the satisfaction given thereby to the church of God. He was pleased to make that a necessary condition of his pardon to the offender; but in no other sense was it to God *satisfactory*. Mean while they of the Roman church, who are most forward to lay hold of these inaccurate expressions which they find among the fathers, in aid of doctrines and practices to which those fathers were utter strangers, may here be admonished to abate of their triumphs, since it is expressly asserted in this very sentence, that *God alone is to be the object of our prayer*; which will quite discard their unauthorized intercessors. Thus they deal with the word *sacramentum*, and hale it in to their service; tho' in our author, and in other fathers, it hath a very general and undetermined signification, and means any sort of obligation from man to God, or any sort of mystery, or declaration from God to man. So that whereas the Romanists make but seven sacraments, they might from the use of the word amongst antient authors, as well have made seventy.

Not till the day of judgment. It should seem therefore that *then* our author thought, tho' not till *then*, the merits of martyrs would be available; which, whatever other truth or consequence it may carry with it, apparently concludes against the present treasury of merits in the Roman church; of which she makes her self the keeper, and ascribes to herself the privilege of drawing on it what bills she pleases, and of applying its stock to such present uses and persons as she thinks fit. Whereas our author expressly saith, that the merits of martyrs were applicable to none, and would be to none available till the day of judgment. In what sense they would be *then* available, is still a question. Possibly, as the fruits of communion were not till then reaped; or else he might have had in view the passage of St. John, which he presently cites from *Revel. 6. 10.* where he mentions the unavailability of the martyr's prayers till the day of judgment; since it is plain in that instance, that they were not effectual, but the martyrs had only for answer, that they must wait for a while, which our author interprets *till the day of judgment*.

Vindicated. This refers to the cry under the altar, that God would avenge, or *vindicate*, the blood of the martyrs. But now the blood of the persons, whose unauthorized claims our author here censures, was so far from being *vindicated*, that in diverse instances it was not yet *shed*: Since some of them were only as yet presumptive martyrs, in prison, perhaps and under sentence; but it did not yet appear with certainty that they would be martyrs; for many who had been confessors, shrunk at a second trial, and proved apostates. The procedure in this case was, that the lapsed procured tickets from the martyrs, who were yet in prison, signifying their (*the martyrs*) desire, that the said lapsed might forthwith be restored to communion. Now (saith our author) since it is not sure that the martyrs intercession will be available with God *till the day of judgment*, nor always even *then*; and since it is farther uncertain in some of these instances, whether the pretenders to this privilege will indeed be martyrs, (in which latter case, and during that uncertainty, there was no colour for their claim) it is very reasonable upon these considerations, that the case in issue should be governed by the standing rules and

A. D. 251. tyrs then recommend any case to us? Why truly I should be ready to honour their request with all possible compliance; provided there be nothing in it but what is lawful and right, agreeable to the tenour of the gospel, and fit in every respect for a bishop to agree to. I could easily come into any measures of observance towards them, if they would moderate their demands by the rules of our religion. But if they ask any thing out of rule, and order; any thing inconsistent with the oeconomy of the gospel; we are then to consider and be satisfied, whether they have the power with God, which they thus pretend to; whether he hath granted their request or no; and then it will be time enough for us to comply with them. For it is by no means certain, that God will in every instance stand to these mens engagements, or immediately make good what they are so forward to undertake for. We find it written of Moses, that he interceded for the sins of the people, and yet their sins were not forgiven them. *I pray thee; (saith he to God) this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; yet now I beseech thee to forgive their sins, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.* Though he were the friend of God, and had been honoured with the singular prerogative of speaking with God face to face; yet he could not, we may observe, succeed in this petition, nor had his intercession sufficient weight with it to appease the wrath of his offended majesty. We read the commendation of Jeremiah from God himself, saying of him and to him; *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.* Yet when the man thus honoured and distinguished would, upon divers occasions, have interceded for his people, we find him restrained by God, saying; *Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear when they make their supplication in the day of their trouble.* Who could pretend to be more righteous than Noah, who, when the earth was filled with wickedness, was the only person found in it exempt from the general contagion? Whose case could be more glorious than Daniel's? Whose faith was there upon earth more likely to be the parent of many martyrdoms than his? Who found such acceptance with God! Who entered the lists so frequently, came out of them always victorious, and survived his manifold conquests! Who was more abounding than Job in works of mercy? Who more firm than he under all temptations? Who more patient under all afflictions? More constant in adherence to the truth, or more humbled under an awful sense of God's majesty and power? Yet God hath declared that there were cases wherein he would not hearken even to these men's intercession: For we find upon the prophet Ezekiel's interceding for the transgression of his people, that he had this for answer; *When the land (saith God) sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out my hand upon it, and I will break the staff of the bread thereof; and will send famine upon it; and will cut off man and beast from it: Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, they only shall be delivered themselves.* We see then, that the most righteous and

Ezek. 14. 13,
14, 18.

Jerm. 7. 16.

Jerem. 1. 5.

Exod. 32. 31,
32, 33.

orders of the church: Our author however was for paying some regard to the intercession of martyrs, tho' he would not allow them a boundless privilege, of granting peace to whom they pleased, to as many as they pleased, and upon what terms, (any or none) they should think fit.

[Exod. 32. 31, 32, 33.] Pacian. epist. 3. citing this passage, observes upon it, that the intercessions of holy men are not always effectual. If they ask, e. g. for such as do not ask for themselves, or for such as persist in their offence; if they extend their intercession not only to one or two, but to multitudes of delinquents. Bp. Fell.

[When they make their supplication in the day of their trouble.] These words are read by our author, though not in the LXX. nor in other versions. See this passage cited again, and noted in §. 4. Exhort. to martyrdom.

powerful

powerful of human intercessors do not always succeed, nor always anticipate A. D. 251.
 the determinations of God. The issue is still in his power, and he reserves to
 himself the right of disposing it as he pleases. Our Lord hath said in the go-
 spel, *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before* Matt. 10. 32;
*my Father who is in heaven: But whosoever shall deny me before men, him*³³
will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Now we must not ima-
 gine, that the gospel of Christ will make good one of its engagements, and drop
 the other: *Both* of them must stand, or *neither* must; wherefore if they who de-
 ny Christ are not obnoxious to the *punishment* denounced against them, neither
 are they who *confess* him entituled to the *reward* which is propounded to them.
 If the *faith* which enables *some* to come off victorious shall surely receive its
 crown, the *treachery* of *others* who are prevailed with to depart from it,
 shall as surely meet with its proper punishment. If the main tenor of the
 gospel may be annulled and vacated, the martyrs then will plainly lose their
 privilege, and can pretend to nothing in virtue of it; or if the tenor of the
 gospel be fixed and cannot be cancelled; they who derive from it the privi-
 leges of their martyrdom cannot, *will* not surely, attempt to do any thing in de-
 rogation of it. Let no one then presume to reflect upon the honour of martyrs,
 or detract from the honour of that glorious crown which they have pushed so
 hard for. The vigour and firmness of their faith remain, without all perad-
 venture, unimpaired and undiminished; nor is it therefore conceivable, that
 they should say or do any thing against the true interest of the gospel, whose
 faith and hope, and all the merit of their truly glorious labours are thence
 derived, and founded thereupon. It is utterly impossible that they who have
 themselves been so punctual in their obedience to the commandments of God,
 should make it their request to the bishops of his church, to pay less regard
 or observance to his will. Can any man pretend that he hath more power or
 mercy than God himself? If he can, then and not otherwise, let him^m undo
 what God hath permitted to be done; and if he thinks there is not elsewhere
 a sufficient power to protect and defend the church, let him lend out an
 helping hand to it, and take it thenceforwards into his own patronage and
 tuition: Or, it may be, he may fancy that all these things have happened
 without the knowledge and permission of God (and therefore that there is
 the more room for the interposal of human agents) when yet the holy scrip-
 ture hath *taught* such *ignorant*, and *reminded* such *forgetful* persons, say-
 ing; *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the* Isai. 42. 24;
*Lord, he against whom they had sinned? For they would not walk in his*²⁵
ways, neither were they obedient unto his law: Therefore he hath poured
upon them the fury of his anger. And again; *Is the hand of the Lord short-* Isai. 59. 1, 2;
ned, that it cannot save? Or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear? No! But
your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have
hid his face from you, that he will not bear. Let us then descend into our
 own hearts and consciences, examine all the sins and secrets thereof, and
 thence consider our respective demerits. Let us remember that we have not
 walked, as we ought, in the ways of the Lord; that we have cast away the
 law of our God, and have not observed his commandments nor his precepts.
 What favourable thought can we harbour of *him*; what faith or fear can we
 suppose *him* to have had of God; *whom* the utmost terrors could not cor-
 rect; *whom* the severities of a fierce persecution could not reform? Whose
 lofty neck would not bow down, even after his fall? Whose proud heart
 would not melt, even after a conquest over it? Who, though he hath re-
 ceived a deadly wound, and is fall'n by it, presumes to menace even those

^m *Undo, &c.*] i. e. Let him restore those to communion whom God hath suffered to cast themselves out of it, as an instance of his *mercy* being greater than God's; and as an instance of his superior power; let him strengthen the church by an addition of the *lapsed* to it, lest God should not otherwise be able to protect it. This seems to be the force of our author's irony.

A. D. 251. who have stood it out, whose strength and whose virtue remain entire to them, without hurt or diminution. Because he is not presently admitted to receive the body of Christ into his polluted hands, nor the blood of Christ into his profane mouth; he takes upon him to resent it at the hands of his bishop as an heinous injury. But how absurd now, O rash man, is the displeasure which hence thou dost conceive against him! Thou art angry with him, whose endeavour it is to turn away the anger of God from thee: Against him dost thou point thy menaces, who is continually employed in imploring the mercies of God towards thee; who feels the hurt thou hast received, of which for thy self thou art in no manner sensible; who shedderh his tears for thee, when thou hast no due apprehensions of thy own wretched state! You, for your self, go on to aggravate and inflame the account of your guilt; and can you then think that God will be reconciled to you, when you shew your self irreconcilable to his bishops and ministers, and persevere in your causeless displeasure against them? Rather be persuaded to hear what we have to offer, and let it sink deep into your heart. Why should you be deaf to our wholesom council? Or blind to that way of repentance which we discover to you?

§. 13.
Certain ex-
amples produ-
ced of God's
vengeance a-
gainst the lap-
sed.

13. Wherefore, I ask again, are you so remiss and insatuated, as to neglect those powerful restoratives, which we have learnt from the holy scriptures, and do thence declare to you? Or if some amongst you should be less apt to be affected with an apprehension of things which are future, and at some distance from you, yet let events which are nearest, which are even present before your eyes, have their due force and influence. What dreadful instances have we seen, and do yet see continually, of God's vengeance executed upon such as have denied him! How lamentable were the ends they came to! And tho' this is not the proper time of punishment and retribution, yet even here, and in this present time, they cannot (we see) escape it. Some are therefore sufferers in present, that others may be reformed by it; the punishment lights upon a few only, but the example is designed for the use of all. One of those, who went up unforced to the capitol with intent to deny his God and Saviour, had no sooner performed what he went for, than he lost his speech. The punishment here was levelled at the part offending; and he could ask thenceforwards for nothing else, who could not, or would not, find words, for asking the pardon of his foul transgression. Another, (a woman) as she was bathing (for she had added this to her other crime, that she immediately resorted to the publick baths, as soon as she had lost the privilege of her baptism; I say this woman) was immediately seized by an unclean spirit, and in the midst of her rage and fury, bit her tongue to pieces; her tongue, I say, the very member, which had either eaten of polluted meats, or else uttered the words whereby Christ was denied. Immediately her own mouth was armed against her, as soon as ever it had partook of that diabolical food. She was her own executioner, and wrecked the vengeance of God upon her self; being presently taken with such pains and tortures in her bowels, that she survived but a very little while, and then gave up the ghost. To one extraordinary occurrence of this kind I was my self a witness, and I shall relate it to you just as it hapned. The parents of a little girl being put to a precipitate and hasty flight, had not time to take care of their little family, and so left the infant in the hands of its nurse, who immediately carried her before the magistrates; the child not being old enough to eat flesh, they gave her some bread dipt in wine, which hapned to be left out of the libations of such as had just before denied their Saviour, and sacrificed to an

^a Feels the hurt. Viz. laments the misfortune of thy lapse.

^b Publick baths. These were held infamous by the christians of those times, from the indecencies committed at them, and from the promiscuous companies which severally frequented them. See note on §. 7. of our author's treatise concerning the Habits of Virgins [tho' too much indulgence, &c.]

^c Parents. Christian parents persecuted for their religion, and so forced in an hurry to leave their families.

^d Libations. These (it hath already been observed) were liquid sacrifices.

idol, in that neighbourhood, where was a great conflux of people gathered together for the purpose. The child was returned to her mother, as soon as the heat of the persecution was abated; and as, when she was forced upon this horrid fact, she was too little to prevent it, or so much as to understand what had been done to her, so neither could she tell it afterwards, or make any discovery of what had befallen her. Thus it came to pass, that, no body knowing what had hapned, her mother brought the child along with her, when I was ^r offering the great christian sacrifice. The poor child, thus joined with the assembly of the ^r faithful, could bear no part in our prayers, nor indeed endure to hear them, but fell into grievous agonies and agitations of mind and body, and, as if she had been put upon the torture to force a confession from her, she gave all the signs imaginable, or possible to her tender years, of her unsuitness for that place and station. When the ^r preparatory service was gone thro', and ^r the deacon had presented ^r the cup, and ^r her turn came to receive it amongst the rest, the child turned her head away from it, closed her lips forcibly together, and by a strong impulse from above, refused the offer of it with all her might. The deacon however persisted in his offer, and notwithstanding all her endeavour to avoid it, forced some part of the consecrated elements into her mouth. Upon which she was immediately seized with convulsions of her stomach, and with a violent fit of vomiting. The holy elements would not stay with her, after her bowels had been polluted with the heathen sacrifices; such is the power and holiness, and such the majesty of our Lord and Saviour! The darkness we see, was to him no darkness, but his light made manifest the most hidden wickedness to a bishop of his church. This was the case of an infant, who was too young to discover what had been done to her thro' another's crime. But there was also a grown person in like circumstances, a woman somewhat advanced in years, who crept in unobserved among the rest of the communicants, when I was offering the great sacrifice; she, as soon as she had received the holy elements, began to heave and struggle for her life, as if she had been mortally wounded, or had swallowed poyson instead of wholesom food. It was not now the weight of the persecution, but a sense of her shameful lapse in it, which overwhelmed her spirits, and went so near her heart. She fell down in a fit of horrible trembling, and the crime which had hitherto been a secret, continued no longer either undiscovered or unpunished; tho' she had escaped the notice of man, yet she could not avoid the judgment of God. Another woman, whose hands had been polluted with heathen sacrifice, as she was trying to ^r open her box, in which she kept the body of our Lord, was deterred from proceeding any

^r Offering the christian sacrifice.] *Sacrificantibus nobis*, are our author's words. See note on §. 16. of first book of Testimonies, [pure offering.]

^r Faithful.] *Sacris*. Those who were permitted to join in the highest acts of christian worship; which penitents and catechumens were not privileged to do.

^r Preparatory service.] *Viz.* a general prayer of intercession and thanksgiving, and that of consecration, *bid* first by the deacon, and then *offered* by the bishop. The eldest formularies which are extant of these several offices may be found in *Apostol. Constitut.* b. 2. ch. 57. and b. 8. from ch. 6. to ch. 13.

^r The Deacon.] He distributed the eucharistical elements.

^r The cup.] Observe the laity admitted to partake of it. They received in process of time *both species* together, the bread dipt in the wine; which was mingled with water; of which we shall hear more in our author's epistles.

^r Her turn.] Infants were admitted, 'tis plain, in our author's time and countrey to receive the holy eucharist; which indeed was a just consequence of interpreting *John* 6. 53. (*except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*) of the holy eucharist; since upon the foot of that principle, children could with no more safety be deprived of the holy eucharist, than of baptism. And as to the preparations necessary, the same objections might seem to lie against infant-baptism, as against infant-communion. But tho' this practice obtained in our author's time, *Tertullian's* silence in it, where he had a just occasion of mentioning it, (upon his advising against infant-baptism) gives some reason of suspecting, that it was not much earlier than our author, nor therefore very general. Altho' after our author's time it continued in the *Western* churches very generally, till the 11th century; when the belief of transubstantiation supplanted it.

^r Open her box in which she kept the body of our Lord.] The custom of the communicants receiving part of the sacred elements in the church, and carrying part of them to their own homes, is hence evident; as well as from those passages in *Tertullian* to his wife, *Nescias maritus quid secretò ante omnem cibum gustes*;

A. D. 511. any farther in her bold attempt, by fire flaking out of it. In a fourth instance, a man, who had been tainted with the guilt of sacrificing, presumed to mix unobserved with the rest of the communicants, and to take his part with them, of what the bishop had consecrated; but he found, to his cost, that he could not eat of the body of our Lord, nor indeed was permitted so much as to touch it; for upon opening his hands he found in them nothing but ashes. A notable proof and example this! that our Lord *forakes* the person who *denies* him; and that whatever such an one shall receive of the *outward sign*, will be utterly insignificant as to any *inward* or *saving purpose*; since what would have carried to another health and salvation, lost in this instance its salutary powers, and was turned into ashes. How many more may we observe of our lapsed brethren, who will not submit to penance, and to a solemn confession of their heinous sin, and are thereupon seized by evil spirits, and driven into despair and madness! We need not multiply examples to this purpose; since there are hardly more instances of persons in this kind *offending*, than there are varieties of punishment observably attending them. The use to be made of such examples will be, not so much considering what other persons have suffered upon this occasion, as what each man, *for himself*, hath deserved to suffer. No one therefore should flatter himself with a belief that he hath escaped the judgment of God, because his punishment is, perhaps deferred; quite otherwise; he should rather thence be apprehensive that he is reserved to a *severer* punishment, and to a more solemn judgment.

S. 14.
The case of those who had procured tickets or certificates in the heat of the persecution.

Mat. 6. 24.

14. Not is the subterfuge, which some would here resort to, any reason against entering upon a course of solemn repentance; they pretend and urge that truly they have washed their hands in innocency, they have not defiled them with these abominable sacrifices; but then they cannot deny the guilt of having obtained certificates from the magistrate, which is at best but a softer way of denying the christian religion, and a proof upon the person so denying, that he was ashamed of his profession. He hath owned himself the doer of all which was done for him by another. And thus though it be written, *Ye cannot serve two masters*, he hath plainly lifted himself in the service of a secular master, by paying to his exact this measure of obedience. In short, he hath obeyed man rather than God. What disgrace, or what crime this shall be reputed in the eye of man, before whom 'tis published, enters not so much into our question; let the party look to it who is guilty; but we are sure he can neither escape nor conceal himself from the all-seeing eye of his judge; concerning whom the Holy Ghost hath thus declared in the book of *psalms*,

gusses; and in his book of prayer; *Accepto corpore Domini & reservato.* (Bishop Fell.) The design was to keep them for use upon all occasions of moment and consequence, and this was every whit as innocent and proper, as any other act of worship upon such occasions. It was a more emphatical and solemn expression of their dependence on God for his guidance and blessing; however it might afterwards degenerate into superstition.

[Solemn confession.] This was the *exomologesis*, which made so large a part of the penitential discipline; wherein the penitent humbly and sorrowfully confessed his sin before the whole congregation, and begged the intercession of the faithful with God for his pardon. This is more distinctly handled in ch. 2. part 1. §. 1 and 2. of the penitential discipline. See also note on §. 114. of the book of testimonies. [Confess unto thee.]

[The use to be made.] What our author designed in these several instances, the reader will easily perceive to have been deterring the lapsed from approaching the holy mysteries, till they had been prepared for a worthy participation by the discipline of penance. Some of these he attests, as known to himself, others he took upon probable report; and they are none of them unlikely, upon a supposal which is very warrantable, *viz.* That miracles were not yet utterly discontinued.

[Owned himself the doer, &c.] Rigalms imagines this to be the case alluded to in epist. 55. to Antonian. §. 8, where the person went to the magistrate, owned himself a christian, and that he could not sacrifice, and therefore purchased of him a ticket, or a certificate, signifying, that he had satisfied the imperial commands, and so indemnifying him from any farther trouble. This the reader will find was judged by our author a more favourable case than theirs was, who had actually sacrificed. But indeed from the words here noted (*fecisse se dixit, quod alius faciendo commisit*) I incline to think, with our right reverend and most learned editor, that a new species of facts is here alluded to, and that the christian

psalms, saying; *Thine eyes did see my imperfections, and in thy book shall all souls be written.* And again, in another passage of holy scripture; *Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* And our Lord himself hath told us; *How all the churches should know that it is he who searcheth the reins and heart.* He sees into the most secret and dark recesses, nor can the most hidden things escape his notice and inspection, who hath said of himself; *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off.* *Can any man hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?* He seeth, indeed, the hearts of all men, he understandeth all their thoughts, and will judge us by our words and thoughts, as well as by our outward actions; discerning (as he doth) the first springs of them, and observing their original formation in the mind and purpose before their birth. How much better and more commendable therefore is their practice; how much more doth it argue of their faith and fear of God, who, though guilty neither of sacrificing, nor of procuring certificates to indemnify them, yet, because they once had it in their thought and purpose, are desirous of making their solemn acknowledgments to God, and to his church, of unburdening their consciences, and thus of healing even the smallest wound inflicted by their adversary? As remembering well that it is written, *God is not mocked!* And assuredly God is neither to be deceived nor mocked; nor can any arts or stratagems circumvent or delude him; it is indeed an aggravation of any man's sin, to take his estimate of God from what he observes of man; and thence to expect impunity, because his crime was not committed openly. Christ our Lord hath expressly declared; *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him shall the son of man be ashamed:* And can any man thenceforwards think himself entituled to the name of a christian, who is ashamed of the character, and afraid of owning it? How can he ever propound to be with Christ, who hath not the courage to acknowledge his relation to him? 'Tis true his guilt is agreed to derive some mitigation from the circumstances of his not having been before the heathen idols, of not having violated the faith of Christ, in the presence of the giddy multitude, which would have triumphed at such a spectacle; of not having polluted his hands and his mouth with their pernicious and fatal sacrifices. These, I say, are circumstances which do indeed palliate his sin, but they do by no means acquit the conscience of it; and therefore it will be a prudential, as well as religious part in him, not to abate the rigour of his penitential mortifications, nor the fervency of his prayer to God for pardon and forgiveness, lest what seemed wanting before to fill up the measure of his iniquity, be afterwards added to his account, from the neglect of making his peace by proper submissions: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every one of you, who have offended, make an humble and solemn confession of his sin whilst he is yet in the land of the living, whilst his confession

istian, who apprehended himself in danger, substituted some heathen by money to personate him, and to go to the magistrate and do what was required, and so procure the certificate in the name of the person who had hired, or otherwise prevailed with him to do this office. (Bp. Fell.) See note on epist. 30. §. 2. [Scandalous subscriptions].

^c *My imperfections.* *Αναγίστας μὲν. Imperfectum meum:* So the LXX and our author.

^d *Shall all souls be written.* The LXX and our author represent this book as that whereby we shall be judged, and so make the passage allusive to the procedure of God with us in his final judgment. The Arabic and Syriac versions have it, *all things*, so hath the Hebrew.

^e *In their thought and purpose.* Their submission to a solemn *exomologesis* for their thought and purpose, is a proof of the esteem which voluntary confession at that time stood in. No one could have called them to account, for the purpose of their heart, if they had not of their own accord declared it. This point is more distinctly handled in the *penitential discipline*. ch. 2. part 1. §. 1.

^f *Whilst he is yet in the land of the living, whilst the satisfaction, intercession, &c.* There could be nothing done therefore, either by the priest, or by the person himself, which would be serviceable to him after his death; which is just what either St. Clement Romanus, or some very antient author under his name hath asserted in 2^d epist. to Corinth. §. 8. *Corinth.* After (saith he) *we are gone out of this world, no confession, nor penance will e'er a whit avail us.* There is mention indeed among the fathers, of an intermediate state of uneasyness, wherein the souls of men are purged from the dross of this world

A. D. 251. is likely to be available, whilst the satisfaction he endeavours to make for himself, and whilst the intercession of the priest for his forgiveness are acceptable unto God: Let him turn, I say, unto the Lord his God with all his heart, and express a becoming sense of his transgression in all humility and contrition of spirit, beseeching God to have mercy on him; to *him* let him bow down his soul; *his* displeasure let him labour to pacify by his penitential sorrow; in *him* alone let him repose his hope and trust.

What sort of
life becomes
penitents.
Jool 2. 12, 13.

§. 15. 15. He, himself, indeed hath taught us how we should address him for pardon; *Turn ye* (saith he) *even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rent your heart, and not your garments.* Let us accordingly return unto the Lord with all our hearts, and endeavour to appease his wrath against us by fasting, and weeping, and by mourning, as he hath directed us. But now can we think that *he* doth in any manner comply with this direction, or lament his sin from his whole heart, or implore the mercies of God with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; who, from the very moment of his crime, hath indulged himself to this day in all manner of delicacies and diversions; whose very looks and gestures proclaim his high feeding, and his pampered body, and plainly shew, that the poor have had no share with him in all his plenty and abundance? Can *he* be thought in a state of contrition for his mortal sin, whose (every) motion and gesture speak the perfect ease and gaiety of his spirit? Who, notwithstanding that he finds it written, *Ye shall not mar the corners of your beards*, is so finical as to thin it, to set his hair in form and figure, and to deck out his person with all affectation? Wherefore, I wonder, should he labour to *please* any one besides, who hath *displeased* God? Or can *she* again be imagined to lament her sin, who finds time and leisure for dressing her self in gorgeous and fine apparel, and forgets that Christ, whom she had once put on, is lost to her? Who is fond of curious necklaces and costly ornaments, and considers not the damage she hath sustained, in the forfeiture of heavenly graces? Alas! put on what you will, take never so much pains in cloathing your self with silk and with foreign wares, yet you will in truth be naked. Adorn your self, as you please, with gold and pearls, or any other jewels, yet will not these conceal your real deformity. Certainly you, who are accustomed to dye your hair, might at least desist from it in the midst of such a dreadful calamity. You, who have been used to draw a black line over your eyebrows, and to give them a false appearance, might now however be persuaded to wash it away with your tears. If you had lost a friend, who was dear to you, by a natural death, or by any other accident, you would lament the sad misfortune, and you would give proofs of your sorrow, in all the accustomed forms, in a dejected countenance, a careless dress, and a mourning habit. You now have lost your soul, you are dead to all spiritual purposes; you survive this loss, and are beginning to perform for this friend,

world by some degree of punishment: (so *Origen contra Cels.* p. 292. *Camb. edit.* and again *ibid.* *alex.* b. 3. ch. 12.) They thought that the souls, even of good men, had a place assigned them called paradise, which was a kind of school, a state of discipline, to fit them for their highest bliss. And thus *Tertullian de anim.* ch. 55. hath scouted those who would not think that the souls of just men could be in any state of uneasiness; although in ch. 58 of the same book, he hath explained it to be nothing but the uneasiness of suspense, which he thought some might lie under, who yet would at last be saved. For indeed it seems to have been the opinion of the fathers, that none but men of the most consummate virtue, were absolutely assured of salvation till the day of judgment. None of them, however, taught or imagined that this intermediate state was alterable by any thing which could here be done to obtain a change in it. Even *Augustin* himself hath declared upon the subject in his epistle to *Macedonius* (No 54.) that *this life is the only place for the reformation of mens manners, and that every man shall save hereafter according to his behaviour here.* As to the word *satisfaction*, the reader may be pleased to remember, or else look back, upon what hath been said about it in §. 10. of this book, notes [*becoming satisfaction*] and [*to satisfy*], as also in §. 11. note [*humiliation*]. And as to the intercession of the priest, that his office was properly that of *mediator*, and that he was no direct or peremptory *absolver*, for one thousand years together after Christ, I conceive I have fully proved in ch. 2. part. 1. §. 3. of the *penitential Discipline*; as also in ch. 3. §. 3, and 4. of the same, where this matter is distinctly and purposely handled.

§. Once put on.] *Viz.* at baptism.

this

this foul of yours its funeral solemnities; and ^h will you not then lament, and mourn; will neither the shame conceived upon your guilt, nor the continuance of your mournful state, prevail with you to secrete your self for a while, and to abstain from publick company, and publick divertisements? Behold, in this case, fresh aggravations of guilt! Here is sin without sorrow for it, without any endeavour used to atone for it! *Ananias, Azarias and Misael*, those three noble youths, were not hindered from praying to God, and from praising him, tho' in the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Tho' their conscience were burdened with no particular guilt, and tho' they had all along endeavoured to approve themselves void of offence towards God, yet did they not cease, in the midst of their glorious martyrdom, to humble themselves before him, and to deprecate his anger, as if they had been the greatest and most grievous sinners. The ⁱ holy scripture tells us, that *Azarias* opened his mouth, and prayed, and together with his companions, confessed his sins in the midst of the fire. Thus likewise *Daniel*, notwithstanding all the manifold graces wherewith he was adorned, notwithstanding his faith and his spotless innocence, and notwithstanding the declared acceptance and favour which his several virtues found at the hands of God, yet (this holy man, I say) endeavoured to interest himself in the mercies of God, by fasting and mortification, by covering himself in sackcloth and ashes, and by making a solemn confession of his sins, saying, *O Lord, the great and mighty God, keeping thy covenant and thy mercy to them who love thee, and to them who keep thy commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkned unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of this land. O Lord, righteousness and honour belong unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces.* This hath been the practice of men who were meek and sincere, humble and holy; this was the way wherein they sought for mercy at the throne of grace: yet now the case is so far altered, that even such as have denied their Lord, are loth to submit to any penance for it, or even to implore his pardon. I beseech you therefore, brethren, that you would resort to the use of proper remedies, and hearken to sober counsel; that you would join with me in lamentation, weeping and mourning, for your heinous sin, I beseech you, ^k that I may beseech God

A. D. 251.

Dan. 3. 23.

Dan. 9. 4, 5;
6, 7.

for

^h Will you not then lament, &c.] Here our author continues his allusion to the customs then obtaining, among such as mourned for the fresh loss of a near or dear friend.

ⁱ Holy scripture tells us.] Viz. in that additional account which the LXX give of these three youths confessing their sins, and the sins of their people. (Bishop Fell.) This is that apocryphal book, called the *Song of the three Children*, which is not found in the Hebrew, but was inserted by the LXX between the 23^d and 24th verses of the 3^d chapter of *Daniel*; and our author hath paid a very great deference to the authority of this addition; when he calls it, as here he does, *scriptura divina*.

^k That I may beseech God for you.] That the form of absolving in the indicative way (*I absolve thee*) is not of more than five hundred years standing, bishop Fell hath justly observed; and it is directly proved in the 1st ch. part 1. §. 3rd as also in ch. 3. §. 4. of the *penitential Discipline*. The ordinary method during the first thousand years after Christ, was, for bishop and church to intercede with God for the penitent's pardon, after he had gone thro' the course assigned him for penitential mortifications. Altho' if absolution be considered as a judicial act, restoring a man only to the peace of the church, and supposing him already pardoned by God, the indicative way may then perhaps be not improper; and *Tertullian* (as bishop Fell hath remarked) seems to have alluded to somewhat like it, where he represents pope *Zepherinus* saying, *I remit the sins of adultery and fornication, to those who have done penance for them.* Altho', by the way, this should rather be considered as *Tertullian's* improvement of *Zepherinus's* management, and as a consequence drawn by him, to ridicule and to scout a practice which he did not like, than as any set form of words used by *Zepherinus* upon that occasion. Our very learned and judicious editor, takes farther notice of St. Paul's manner of releasing the incestuous *Corinthian* from his ecclesiastical bond, that it seemed to proceed in the indicative way, *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also*; but then, with all submission, it doth not hence appear, that this was the very form wherein the apostle absolved him; since the words next following shew, that the offender had really been absolved before; the apostle immediately subjoining, *For if I forgave any thing to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ*, 1 Cor. 2: 10. So that, I say, he had forgiven him before; and it doth not hence appear in what form this was done. The confessors say indeed in a very peremptory strain to our author, in ep. 23. *Know that we have given place to the persons, in whose behaviour, since their crime, you are satisfied.* But be this ever so peremptory, it was

M m

not

A. D. 251. for you; my prayers are first directed to you, that you would give me leave and liberty to offer them to God for you. Wherefore I again exhort, persuade, and intreat you, that you would submit to a full and proper penance for your sin, and give all becoming proofs of your hearty sorrow for it. And let not the imprudence, or stupid neglects of any, who are engaged in so foul a guilt, and yet have no sufficient sense of their danger, prevail upon you to resemble them in the blindness and hardness of their hearts. This obstinacy of theirs is really to be considered as judicial, and as a farther mark of God's wrath against them, who hath said by his prophet concerning the Jews, *Isai. 29. 10.* That he had¹ nailed them down to their sins. And again his Spirit hath pronounced of men in like condition, *2 Theff. 2. 10, 11, 12.* That they received not the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God should send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Thus pleasing themselves in unrighteousness, and being carried away by the blindness of an heart deeply attached to sin, these men despise the rules of the gospel, neglect the application of any remedy to their wound, and refuse upon the whole any submission to penitential mortifications. As they were rash and heedless before the commission of their heinous sin, so they are obstinate and headstrong after it; inconstant then, and unsubmitive now; they fell when they should have stood; and now when they should fall down, and humble themselves in the sight of God, and in the face of his church, they stand up erect and lofty, and will not bend to any discipline. They have presumptuously restored themselves to the peace of the church, when no one else would ever have thought them fit for it; and being led away with vain promises, and joined with company like themselves, such as have deserted and betrayed their faith, they confound falshood with truth, and embrace the one instead of the other. They imagine that communion with those is valid and effectual, who themselves, are entitled to no communion; they put their trust in man against God, tho' they would not in the time of tryal, trust to God against Man. Such men as these, my brethren, you should avoid as far as you are able; you should be cautious of coming near them, and should have nothing to do with them. *1 Tim. 2. 17.* Their words will eat as a canker, all communication with them is infectious, and spreads like poyson, and their persuasions carry with them worse consequences, than did the very persecution it self. Penance here was left as the only remedy. But now they who would represent this remedy as needless, leave the case incurable and hopeless: and thus whilst some rashly undertake for, and others as rashly trust to, salvation, against the terms of the gospel, there is left no hope of it upon any firm or reasonable bottom. As for you, my beloved brethren, who are rightly disposed to a fear of God, and who in the midst of your great calamity have not lost a sense of it, open, I beseech you, the eyes of your minds to a just apprehension of your sin and danger; neither on the one hand despairing of mercy, nor, on the other, claiming a right to pardon. As God is always kind, and hath the indulgence of a gracious Father, so on the other hand we should not forget that his majesty is great as his mercy; and if the Father is to be loved, the judge, however, should be the object of our fear.

not precisely the *absolution* of those persons which was thus given, but only a recommendation of them to the bishop for it; or, at most, a notification to the bishop of their past action on the behalf of the lapsed; yet still he was the person to absolve them, in whose power alone it was to relax the discipline they had merited to lie under. And besides; *confessors*, we know, were apt to overstrain their privilege, in which our author made a notable stand against them.

¹ Nailed them down. *J. Dedit illis Deus spiritum transpositionis.* So our author renders the LXX's, *transpositionis*, which we from the Hebrew read the *spirit of deep sleep*. The meaning of *transposition*, Theophylact hath explained by a *disposition of mind immutably fixed upon evil*. *Kαὶ ὁμοιωθέντες τῷ σατανᾷ, ὡς ἐγενήθη αὐτῷ.* To be fixed any where, or to any thing, as it were, by a nail. Bishop Fell.

16. Let us then mourn and weep in proportion to the greatness of our sin; A.D. 251. §. 16. as the wound is large and deep, let our care of it proceed accordingly, and let the severity of our penitential labours not fall short of the heinousness of our guilt. That the penitent's humiliation should eye with the magnitude of his sin. Can you believe of God, however compassionate, that he will immediately be reconciled to you, after you have expressly denied and betrayed your faith, after you have given an avowed and solemn preference to your estate before him, and after you have polluted his temple by stuffing it with profane and forbidden meats? Can you suppose that he will be so ready and so *hasty* to take pity on you, who have *deliberately* disdained all relation to him? No! You must ask more fervently, must continue a great while instant in prayer and supplication, must spend whole days in sorrow, and whole nights in tears, and every hour of your time in mourning and lamentation. You must prostrate your selves upon the ground, be content to lie down in sackcloth and ashes, and ^m to neglect all care of dress and ornament; after having so shamefully *put off* Christ, to take no thought what else you shall *put on*; after having eaten the ⁿ food of devils, to chuse thenceforwards abstinence and fasting; to be diligent in works of righteousness and charity, which have so good a tendency ^o to purge your consciences, and to deliver your souls from death. What your adversary ^p would have taken from you let Christ receive; for indeed the fortune which helped to ensnare and ruin you, can no longer be the just object of your love or your adherence: You should rather detest it as a mortal enemy, avoid it as you would Banditti, or cut-throats; shrink from it, as you would from poyson, or a sword. What remains of it should only be improved to the use of redeeming with it your crime and guilt; you should forthwith betake your selves to acts of charity and mercy; the remainder of your fortune should entirely be spent in seeking relief against that grievous wound which your lapse hath given you: God, who is to judge you, should be engaged, by your loans to him, to become your debtor. Thus lively and active was the faith of the first christians in the apostolique age; they were liberal in hand and heart, gave all they had to be disposed of by the apostles for charitable uses, and yet they had no such sins as yours to be redeemed by these extraordinary heights of munificence and mercy. If any man will pour out his soul to God in fervent prayer, if he will shed in great abundance penitential tears, if he will labour to pacify the wrath of God by repeated acts of righteousness and charity, then at length it may be hoped, that he will pity and pardon, who hath thus declared himself to the purpose, saying; *When thou shalt return and repent, thou shalt be saved, and shalt know where thou hast been.* And again; *I have no pleasure, saith the Lord, in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* And the prophet *Joel* hath declared the loving-kindness of the Lord at his express commandment, saying; *Turn ye to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil which he hath inflicted upon the sinner.* He therefore can grant you the

Isai. 30. 15.

Ezek. 33. 11.

and ibid. 18.

32.

Joel 2. 13.

^m To neglect all care of dress.] *Sordibus voluntari.* This was the custom of such as professed a state of mourning or affliction: so our author recommends nothing out of course, nothing but what was the received usage with regard to such persons and circumstances.

ⁿ The food of devils.] *Viz.* The heathen sacrifices so called by the apostle; *1 Cor. 10. 20, 21.*

^o To purge your consciences.] So *Origen* in *Levitic. Homil. 3.* reckons seven ways whereby remission of sins may be procured; among which that of *Alms* is the 3^d in number with him.

^p Would have took.] *Auferat, did take,* are our author's words; but I conceive my translation to have been his true meaning, for the *lapsed* by *lapping* prevented the *actual* loss of their estates.

^q When thou shalt return.] Here our author literally followeth the *LXX.* whose translation; though not easily reducible to the letter of the present *Hebrew*, yet (as *Jerom* hath observed in his epistle to *Sabinianus*, and in his commentary) may, by way of analogy, take in its sense; inasmuch as it is true that the Holy Scripture exhorteth all sinners to return and repent of their sins; that so they may be saved; and understand where they have been, and that they have trusted in vanity. (*Bishop Fell.*) We render this passage, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, &c. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* versions read this passage much as our author doth.

^r Which he hath inflicted.] *Qui sententiam faciat adversus malitiam irrogatus:* where *Bishop Fell* hath judiciously interpreted *malitiam* of *mala pœna*, and our author is constant to this lesson. We have it

again

A. D. 251. the forgiveness for which you are so earnest and so much in haste; he can mitigate the sentence denounced upon your sin; he can pardon his humble supplicants, his sincere penitents, such as bring forth fruits meet for repentance: He can make in their case, effectual and available, whatever either the martyrs shall ask, or the bishops and ministers of his church shall do on their behalf; or if any one, by his extraordinary acts of contrition and repentance, shall find extraordinary favour in the sight of God, and shall fully atone for his passed offence, God will perhaps retrieve for him, by his providence, the opportunity he hath lost; will put arms afresh into his hands, whereby he may stand once more upon his defence after his former lapse, will invigorate the powers of his faith, and make it at length successful and victorious. Thus the soldier of Christ will rally his broken forces, renew the contest with his enemy, and will fight with the more ardour and courage, from a sorrowful and shameful remembrance of his passed miscarriage. He who shall thus endeavour to appease the anger of God; he whom an humble sense of his sin shall inspire with greater degrees of constancy and firmness for any future encounter, will derive upon himself the favourable assistance of God, and will contribute as much to the joy and triumph of the church, as before he had contributed to her dejection and grief; nor will he then be entituled merely to the pardon of his sin, but even to a crown of glory.

again from him in §. 2. of the advantages of Patience. The LXX read it, *παρακαλῶν ἐν τῇ καυχήᾳ* the vulgar Latin, *præstabilis*, (i. e. excellens, præstans) *super malitiâ*, (i. e. super irâ vindictâ, punitione q. d. fortior est irâ) Cicero, *de Amicitia*, *de naturâ Deorum*, lib. 2. *de Oratore* lib. 2. and Gellius, as cited by a Lapidæ, so use the word *præstabilis*. Rigaltius gives this turn to it; and saith, that God repenteth *adversus malitias irrogatas*, when man inflicts upon himself the *mala pœna*, i. e. when he punishes himself for his sins, by penitential sorrow; so he makes the word *præstabilis* to mean, *se præstans pacatum*. The Arabick version reads this, *Who is grieved at the wickedness of men*; the Syriac, *Who turneth away evil*; the Chaldeæ paraphrast hath thus expounded it, *Who recalleth his word*, (or his sentence) *from bringing on evil*. The Hebrew speaks only to God's being merciful, and turning from his anger.

[Retrievs for him, &c.] *Viz.* call him to the crown of martyrdom, and enable him to obtain it; which, according to the notions then received of it, was looked upon as an extraordinary favour from God, and as carrying with it the pardon of all former sins, like baptism. This was accordingly ranged by Origen in the passage quoted from him, [note on this §. *purge your consciences*;] as the next in order to baptism, for obtaining remission of sins; and therefore in the second of his seven classes.



A Discourse of the LORD'S PRAYER.



A. D. 252. This was written, in the judgment of our learned editor, soon after the two preceding discourses; and as it is well known, that the two former were sent to Rome towards the latter end of the year 251; this seems to have been written soon after, viz. about the beginning of the year 252. The design of it was, not very foreign from that of the preceding tracts, but, as the Unity of the Church will be found to have been much in our author's thoughts, whilst he was writing his discourse upon the Lord's Prayer, so, his discourse upon that prayer, hath a notable tendency to promote such unity. The antients much extolled this performance of our author's; Augustin frequently refers to it; and in his book of Grace and Free-will, exhorts and intreats his readers, That they would

would attentively peruse, what the blessed *Cyprian* had written upon the Lord's Prayer, that they would labour to understand it as far as they were able, and commit as much of it, as they could, to memory. A. D. 252.



THE precepts of the gospel, my beloved brethren, are to be considered as the lessons of God to us, as the foundations of our hope, and the supports of our faith; as spiritual consolations to us, shewing us the paths of righteousness, and setting us forward in the way of salvation: for whilst with teachable and willing minds we receive upon *earth* the instructions hence conveyed to us, we are led on insensibly to the kingdom of *heaven*. The will of God had been revealed to the world before in some competent measure by his servants the prophets; but now the Son of God, who was the *word*, by which those prophets themselves were taught to speak, hath revealed it far more copiously, and more clearly; he hath not now, as formerly, directed *his way to be prepared for him*; but he hath come amongst us in his own person, and pointed to us the way we should henceforwards walk in; that so we, who had hitherto sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, without any clue to lead or to direct us, might keep close to the paths of life, thro' the help of his gracious guidance and illumination. Now amongst other excellent precepts and rules of living, whereby he hath consulted our eternal welfare, he hath also given us a form of prayer; hath instructed us in clear and express terms, what we should pray for.

§. 1.
The praises of
gospel pre-
cepts.

2. He, who gave us life, hath taught us how to pray, with the same indulgence and benignity, wherewith he hath conferred upon us numerous other benefits and mercies; and when we address the Father in the language of the Son, and in the manner which he (the Son) hath recommended; without all peradventure the Father will hear us. The Son had foretold in his life time, *That the hour was coming, when the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth*; and he hath now fulfilled his own prediction; thus we, who from the satisfaction made by him to his Father's justice, have received the Spirit of truth, are taught by him to *pray in spirit and in truth*. For what prayer can any man think more *spiritual*, than a prayer which is given us by Christ himself, who also sent the Holy Spirit to us? What prayer can any man imagine to have more *truth* in it, than that which came out of his mouth, who is *truth* it self? So that now to pray in any manner different from what he hath prescribed to us, would argue at once our ignorance and our guilt; nor should we forget that smart rebuke of our Lord upon the pharisees, saying, *Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition*. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us pray, as God himself hath been pleased to teach us; those petitions are most likely to be well received by him, which are drawn in his form, and by his order, and conceived in the very words of his own dear Son. The words of a Son so dear, cannot but be acceptable to a Father so indulgent. So that when we pray to God, he, who dwelleth in our *hearts*, should also direct our *lips*. And since we have him for our *advocate with the Father*, to make intercession for our sins; when we, wretched sinners, are begging the pardon of God for our own offences, we should chuse to do it in the words of our righteous advocate. For since we have a gracious assurance from him, that *whatsoever we shall ask of the Father in his name, he (the Father) will give*

§. 2.
That it was
an instance of
kindness equal
to any other,
the teaching
us how to
pray.
John 4. 23.

Mark 7. 9.

John 2. 1.

John 16. 23.

^a *His way to be prepared.*] This alludes to *John* the baptist his forerunner, of whom *Isaiah* had prophesied, ch. 40. v. 3. and to whom the evangelist *St. Matthew* (ch. 3. v. 3.) applied that prophecy, of a voice crying in the wilderness, *Preparing the way of the Lord*.

^b *To pray in any manner different.*] Our author, 'tis hence apparent, considered the Lord's prayer, both as a form of prayer, and as a directory for any other devotions we should make use of. Other prayers, we well know, were used in the primitive church, which the *pope* or *bishop* composed for his people in their public service; but the model of all was to be taken from our Lord.

A. D. 252. *it us; with how much greater success and efficacy are we likely to ask, when we not only use his name in asking, but his very words too?*

§. 3.
That he who
prays should
do it with re-
verence and
godly fear.

Matt. 6. 6.

Jer. 23. 23,
24.

Prov. 15. 3.

Ezek. 5. 22.

Revel. 2. 23.

1 Sam. I. 13.

3. Now when we are presenting our petitions to the throne of grace, we should do it with reverence and modesty, with decency and godly fear. We should consider our selves as standing then in the more immediate presence of God; and therefore the gesture of our bodies, and the modulation of our voices, should be formed into a fitness for bearing his observation. For as it is a mark of confidence and boldness to be clamorous and noisy, so there is a certain decorum in the tone of the voice, which speaks the modesty of an humble petitioner. Our Lord hath therefore recommended secret prayer to us, that it should be offered in our most private retirements, in our closets and our chambers, as most agreeable to our belief and persuasion of God's omnipresence, that he beholds and regards us all, and filleth all places, even the darkest corners with the glory of his majesty, as it is written of him; *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off: Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him; do not I fill the heaven and earth?* And again; *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* Wherefore when we meet our brethren together in the publick congregation, and there join with his priest in the oblation of his heavenly sacrifice, reverence and modesty are particularly (then) becoming us; we should not utter our prayers at random, with confused and disorderly voices, nor offer up our petitions to the throne of grace, without a religious awe upon our spirits, with any indecent noise, or any needless multiplicity of words; since the most secret aspirations of the soul ascend up to God as clearly and fully as any articulate sounds whatsoever. Nor needs he therefore to be reminded of our wants by any of our forward importunities, who sees into the secrets of all our hearts, as our Lord hath himself suggested, saying; *Why reason ye in your hearts?* And again; *All the churches shall know that I am, he which searcheth the reins and hearts.* These were the rules observed by *Hannah* (herein no improper type of the christian church) who prayed to God in the retirements of her soul, not in loud and clamorous strains, but in secret and silent ejaculations: Yet though her prayer was secret, her faith was not so; if her voice did not speak for her, yet her heart did; she knew that God would hear her addressing him in such a manner; she asked in faith, and therefore obtained her request. Thus the holy scripture hath represented her case and circumstances, saying; *That she spake in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard:* And the Lord we find hearkened unto her.

[*Join with his priest in the oblation of his heavenly sacrifice.*] Bishop Fell hath observed upon this, that the people joined in this sacrifice, and that solitary masses were yet unknown, wherein the priests communicate singly. And I add, that the holy communion seems here to have made a part of the service in each assembly for publick worship.

[*Any needless multiplicity of words.*] Bishop Fell hath here well observed, that our author in this caveat did probably allude to the heathen's barrology, censured by our Saviour *Matt. 6. 7.* who thought that they should be heard for their much speaking; or perhaps to that custom which obtained amongst them, of having a monitor to assist them in the forms of their address to the several objects of their worship; since upon a right and exact manner of application they thought there was much depending. I add that *Tertullian* manifestly alludes to this usage in *Apolog. ch. 36.* where he tells the heathens, *That christians with hands and eyes lift up in token of their innocence, with heads uncovered as not being ashamed to show them, and without a prompter because they prayed with great innocency of thought, and fervency of affection (sine monitore quia de pectore) that christians, he saith, did then pray for all authorities and powers; that God would grant them a long life, a peaceable and quiet reign, union and security in their present families, valiant armies, a faithful council, good subjects, and whatever else their own hearts would desire.* Now *Tertullian* could have made no record of the prayers of christians if there had not been a stated rule for them, or if they had consisted of any arbitrary effusions. The several forms which were antiently used, and which in all likelihood are a good deal more antient than the edition of that work, are extant in the constitutions, especially in b. 7. from ch. 25 to the end, and b. 8. ch. 12, &c. But our author, I imagine, when he is guarding here against confused and indecent noise, and a needless multiplicity of words, refers to that time of private prayer in the publick congregation, when each was to pray for himself, whilst the presiding officer prayed in private for the whole. This seems his meaning from the words next following. *That the most secret aspirations of the soul ascend to God as fully and clearly as any articulate sounds.* [*Deus non vocis, sed cordis auditur qd.*] See note on coun. Carthag. *lustr. 18.* note *Tertullian*

Thus

Thus we read also in the book of *psalms*; *Speak in your own hearts and in your chambers, and be still.* The Holy Ghost hath also suggested to us the same lesson by the mouth of *Jeremiah*, saying; *That God should be worshipped in the heart.* Now whosoever pretends to worship God should bear in his mind the manner wherein the publican is represented praying in the temple together with the pharisee, neither with eyes nor hands lift up to heaven; as if he were confidently sure of acceptance there; but *smiting upon his breast*, and acknowledging his sinfulness, he besought the mercies of God to pardon and succour him. The Pharisee was much delighted with, and depended much upon his own performances; and accordingly the other was thought a fitter object of God's acceptance, who placed not the hope of it in any assurances of his own innocence (since there is none who sinneth not) but humbly confessed his sin to God; and God, who is ever ready to extend his compassions to the meek and contrite, hearkned to his prayer: The history of that whole transaction is thus transmitted to us from the mouth of our Lord himself in his gospel: *Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a pharisee and the other a publican. The pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself; God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all which I possess. And the publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalteth himself shall be abased, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.* Wherefore, my beloved brethren, since these things are taught us out of the holy scriptures; and since we are thence instructed how we ought to pray; let us learn from the same authority, *what we are to pray for; After this manner (saith our Lord) pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and suffer us not to be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

* *Still.* Transpungimini, the LXX read καταβιβασθαι. See note on §. 15. of the case of the lapfed. Nailed them down. Epist. Jer. 6.

[Holy Ghost suggested by the mouth of Jeremiah.] This is the apocryphal epistle of Jeremiah, and our author's manner of quoting this passage, as suggested by the Holy Ghost, seems to give it, in his opinion, a large proportion of the authority of canonical scripture. What to me appears evidence I can never bring my self to reject or to deny, upon the credit of any received notions whatsoever; nor can I therefore deny, nor ought I to conceal, that our author seems (to me at least) to have made very little if any difference between this and other books which are confessedly canonical. Where the common answer will serve, and will solve the difficulty, it may have, for ought any thing I shall urge against it, its proper force; and therefore I do not affirm that every quotation of these apocryphal books, even though joined with quotations of canonical scriptures, without any mark of difference between them (I do not, I say, affirm that every quotation of such a book) by the fathers is a proof of their esteeming it canonical; for they might quote it only *ad humanum* [as see note on §. 10. of the first book of testimonies, *book of Tobit] or as an useful, though not an inspired passage; but where they lay a great stress upon the proof thence deduced [as see note on §. 14. of the 1st book of testimonies *Wisdom of Solomon] or where they otherwise expressly ascribe what they quote to the Holy Ghost, as in the case before us, there I cannot but think it an intimation of their sentiments, that the book so quoted is very little if at all different from canonical scripture. N. B. Baruch and Jeremiah have already been observed to have been promiscuously cited by our author, because the former was the latter's scribe. See note on §. 6. of the 2^d book of testimonies *Baruch and Jeremiah. See moreover note on Tob. 12. 8. in §. 26. of this tract, and note [by the testimony of truth it self] in §. 4. of alms and good works.

[Suffer us not to be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.] Whether the vulgar African version ran thus in our author's time, as explanatory of the original text; or whether those MSS. of our author are truest, which only give us the common reading, *lead us not*, it is not very material to enquire; since the words, *suffer us not to be led*, carry the same meaning with *lead us not*. It may be more material to observe, that it appears very evidently from our author, that he took this citation of the Lord's prayer from St. Matthew, and not from St. Luke, by his introducing it in the words of St. Matthew (after this manner pray ye; and not in St. Luke's, when ye pray say, Luke 11. 2.) as also by his using the words, *debts and debtors*, (which are St. Matthew's) instead of *sins*, and instead of *for we forgive every one that is indebted to us*, (which are St. Luke's expressions.) And yet our author hath not added the doxology, *for thine is the kingdom, &c.* which we now read in St. Matthew, and to which it should therefore seem that he was quite a stranger.

A. D. 252.

§. 4.

That christi-
ans should use
a prayer in
common,
which should
suit the occa-
sions and
wants of o-
thers, as well
as their own
in particular.

4. The first thing hence observable is, that our great preacher of peace and unity enjoined not his prayer to be used by any man for *himself* alone, or for his *own* particular occasions, exclusive of other men's interests and concerns. We are not taught by it to say, *My Father which art in heaven*; nor, *give me this day my daily bread*; nor doth any man ask for his *own debts* in particular, that they may be *forgiven him*; nor that *he* only may not be *led into temptation, or delivered from evil*. No! Our prayer is more general and publick-spirited; and when we pray, we pray not for any single person, but for our whole body; because indeed ^h all christian people are but one body. God, who is the author of peace and concord, and hath recommended unity to us in such a pressing manner, would have *one* to pray for *all*, even as he himself vouchsafed to be our common representative, and ^l bore us *all* in *one* single person. This rule of prayer we find observed by the three youths when shut up in the fiery furnace; they perfectly accorded together in an unity of spirit and of prayer. We are assured of this by express authority of holy writ, which, in representing the fact to us, and in telling us how persons of their figure and character *did* actually pray, doth at the same time recommend to us an imitation of their practices, and virtually teacheth us *how we should* pray. Then *they three* (saith the holy scripture) *sang an hymn to God, and blessed him, as it were, with one mouth*. They spake in their prayer as if they had *all* but *one* mouth to speak with; and yet Christ had not then appeared in the flesh to teach them how they should pray; but their words were therefore powerful and successful, and they obtained by them what they asked for, because God is ever ready to hear a prayer like theirs, accompanied with holy dispositions, and uttered in the unity of the spirit, and the bond of peace. Thus we learn that the apostles also prayed with the rest of our Lord's disciples after his ascension. *They all continued* (saith the holy scripture) *with one accord, in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren*. They continued, it is said, *with one accord in prayer*; an example this, and a double proof, of their *servency* in it, and of their *unity*! For God indeed, who *maketh men to be of one mind in an house*, will admit none into the mansions of eternity, but such only as are of *one accord in prayer*. Now it is admirable to consider, my beloved brethren, how many matters of the greatest moment are collected together and contained in the Lord's prayer; ^h how few are the words, and how mighty is their sense and energy; inso-much that the whole sum and substance of the gospel is indeed there abridged, and reduced within the narrow compass of that excellent formulary!

* Dan. 3. 51.

1st. 1. 14.

Psal. 68. 6.

§. 5.

That prayer
begins most
auspiciously,
with the ac-
knowledge-
ment
of God as our
Father.

John 1. 11,

12.

5. Thus, saith our Lord, pray ye; *Our FATHER which art in heaven*. He who is become a *new man*, and is *regenerated*, and reconciled to his God thro' the grace of the gospel, beginneth very properly his address to God, with the compellation of *Father*, as having so lately commenced his *Son*. *He came* (saith the holy scripture) *unto his own, and his own received him not*; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the *sons of God, even to them who believe on his name*. He therefore who hath *believed on his name*, and is thereby become the son of God, ought hence to take his rise, and to profess himself, with gratitude and thanksgiving, the

[All christian people one body.] *Totus populus unum sumus.* Tertullian had said before, *Corpus sumus de consensu religionis et disciplina unitate, et spei fide, &c.* in apolog. c. 39. so both agreed in the unity of the whole body of christians; and in their making but *one* church. [Bore us all.] *Quomodo in uno omnes ipse portavit, viz.* by being our representative, and the common head of so many members; by wearing our nature, and being found in fashion as a man; and by suffering in his own person for us *all*. See note on §. 11. of the 3^d book of Testimonies, [and bear him.] [Dante 3. 51.] This is that additional account of the LXX, which before was noted in §. 15. of the case of the lapsed [holy scripture tells us.] [Breviter in summa collecta.] From the word *collecta*, and from so many matters of moment being said to be *collected* together in the Lord's prayer, we call our shorter formularies of prayer, such as generally our liturgy consists of, *collects*.

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son of God, praying to him, as his *Father which is in heaven*. Nor is it here improper for him to remember and allude to ^m those solemn renunciations, whereby each man, in some of the first words uttered by him at his new birth, hath bid a ⁿ final adieu to his father according to the flesh, and hath engaged to acknowledge none thenceforwards for his father, but him only which is in heaven: As it is written; *He who saith to his father and mother, I have not known you, and doth not acknowledge his own children,* (he it is who) *observeth this word, and keepeth this covenant.* Thus likewise our Lord himself hath commanded us in his gospel, That we *should call no man our father upon earth, since one is our Father which is in heaven.* And to the disciple who had spoke to him of burying his father, our Lord replied, *Let the dead bury their dead;* for the man had said, it seems, that his father was dead; whereas we know, that the true Father of all believers, is ever living. Nor is it enough, we may observe, my beloved brethren, to call him simply, *Father which is in heaven;* but we add, and say moreover, *Our Father, i. e. the Father of all believers;* of all who thro' him are sanctified, and renewed, at their second birth by baptismal grace, and thence are become his children. This is yet farther, a character and appellation, which reflects severely upon the *Jews*, who not only refused to believe in Christ, tho' foretold to them by their prophets, and sent to them in the first place before all others, but treated him besides with all imaginable contempt and scorn, and put him at last to a cruel death. They therefore can no longer call God their Father; our Lord himself having confuted their pretension, and plainly referred them to their proper original, saying of them and to them; *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.* God hath also complained, with some indignation, by the mouth of his prophet *Isaiah*, saying, *I have begotten children, and have set them on high, and they have despised me; the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know me, my people doth not consider me: Ah! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, corrupt children! Ye have forsaken the Lord, ye have provoked^o that Holy One of Israel to anger.* Wherefore, to upbraid these men with their perverseness, we christians, when we pray, say, *Our Father*, because he is now become *ours*, and bears no longer this relation to *them*, who have so contemptuously forsaken him; nor indeed can sinners, continuing in a state of guilt, with any propriety be called his children; but they, whose sins are forgiven them, may fairly be allowed the title; as having moreover a claim by promise to life and immortality: Our Lord hath pronounced upon the case of the one and the other, to the following purpose; *Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin; and the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.* What acknowledgments therefore shall we make to God, for the immensity of his love and his

^m *Those solemn renunciations.*] Viz. those which were made at baptism; of which more hath been said in note on §. 5. of the *habit of virgins*, [whose *poms*.] The notoriety of these, is a farther proof that forms were used in the publick worship, and in its most solemn offices.

ⁿ *Final adieu to his father.*] Thus the *Jews* received their proselytes from another religion; the new convert renounced his kindred of this world, when he entered upon engagements relating to another; and thus, 'tis probable, the christians might receive to their baptism those who came over to them from the Gentile worship. They renounced ('tis certain) the *world and the flesh*, and under these general words might well and fairly be understood any relations or attachments to the *world* or the *flesh*, which should contradict the engagements into which they then entered. According to that of our Saviour, *Matt. 10. 37. He that loveth father, or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me.* The father and the mother might be loved, but not more than Christ and his religion. Wherefore when father and mother opposed Christ and his religion, then, and not otherwise, they were to be renounced. But in any case besides this, where the duty of christians to God and to their families did not interfere, the apostle hath laid down the rule we are to go by, *1 Tim. 5. 8. If any man provide not — for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

^o *That Holy One.*] *Illum sanctum.* Our author it seems laid a stress and emphasis upon the *Greek* article *ὁ*, the *LXX* reading it, *ὁ ἅγιος* as if they designed to point that *Holy One* in a character of distinction.

A. D. 252. goodness towards us; who hath directed our prayer to be addressed to him under the name and character of *our Father*, and entituled us thereby to like privileges with Christ himself, that we should be called the *sons of God*, even as Christ is also the Son of God. A relation (this!) so honourable to us, that none of us should ever have presumed to claim it in our addresses to him, had he not expressly permitted and directed us so to pray! Wherefore, my beloved brethren, we ought to remember, when we call God our Father, that we are most particularly thence obliged to behave like his children; that as we rejoice in the title of *his children*, he may also have reason to be pleased with his relation to us as *our Father*. We should consider our selves as the temples of God, and our lives should proclaim for us, that he dwelleth in us. Our conversation should speak the Spirit by which we are acted; and as we profess to have entered upon a spiritual and heavenly life, we should think and do every thing within the character we have so assumed; we should remember that notable declaration made by God; *Them who honour me, I will honour; and they who despise me, shall be lightly esteemed*; as well as what the apostle St. Paul hath observed to the Corinthians; *Ye are bought with a great price; therefore glorify God, and bear him in your bodies*.

§. 6. 6. We next proceed, and say, *Hallowed be thy name*; not that thereby we wish any accessions of holiness to God, or suggest a possibility of his receiving any such accessions from our prayers; what we ask of him here, amounts to no more than this, That *his name may be hallowed in us*. But by whom (it may be asked) can God be *hallowed* or *sanctified*, who is himself the great and only true *sanctifier*? Yet since he hath said, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*; we, in conformity to this command, desire of him, that as we have been sanctified by his *holy* baptism, we may persevere in that holiness which was then conferred on us; and this is, surely, no improper subject for our daily prayer; since indeed we do all stand in need of a daily sanctification; that the sins which we daily commit, may thence be daily cleansed and done away. What sort of sanctification that is, which the grace of God confers on us, and in what consisting, the apostle hath fairly intimated, where he tells the Corinthians; *Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were you; but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Observe that he saith, We are sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the spirit of our God. We therefore desire of him, that this sanctification may be continued to us, and since our Lord and judge hath admonished the person healed by him, to beware of *sinning any more, lest a worse thing should come unto him*; therefore we persevere in this prayer to God; therefore we make it each day and night the continual subject of our request to him, that those enlivening and quickening influences which we first received from his grace, may be continued to us through his favourable protection.*

§. 7. 7. We go on, and make it our farther request, that his *kingdom may come*; where our meaning is, that the kingdom of God may be exhibited to us, and that we may have our part in it, as before we had asked, that his *name* might be *hallowed in us*. For there is no time in truth and strictness wherein he doth

Upon the next petition, that the name of God may be hallowed.

Levit. 20. 7.

1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.

John 5. 14.

§. 7. That his kingdom may come.

[*And bear him.*] See note on §. 11. of the 3^d book of testimonies, where this way of reading is observed and explained.

[*Hallowed be thy name.*] 'Tis certain we have no way of *hallowing the name of God* so effectual, or so acceptable to him, as that of pursuing the apostle's advice, and of *cleansing our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor. 7. 1. Thus we may *sanctify the Lord God in our hearts*, according to our author's comment upon this petition.

[*Extortioners.*] See for this; note on §. 65. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

not actually reign; nor can that be properly said to have had a beginning which A. D. 252.
 was from all eternity, and shall continue for ever. We therefore beseech him
 that the *kingdom* may come wherein we are interested, which God hath pro-
 mised, and Christ hath purchased for us with his blood; that we who have
 lived in this world as slaves and servants, may reign hereafter together with
 Christ our head, as he hath assured us, saying; *Come ye blessed of my Father,* Mat. 25. 34.
receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. It
 is not here impossible nor incongruous, my brethren, that Christ himself should
 be meant by the kingdom of God; he whose speedy coming we daily desire,
 whose presence amongst us we ardently long for: For since he is our *resurre-*
ction, because we *rise again* in him, he may by the same figure be styled that
kingdom wherein we expect our part, because we shall also *reign* in him. We
 desire the kingdom of God, *i. e.* an *heavenly* kingdom, with a very fit allu-
 sion to those *earthly* kingdoms which we here observe upon the scene before us.
 Now he who hath once renounced the world is above its honours, and values
 no kingdoms of the world which he hath so renounced: He therefore who
 thus hath devoted himself to God and Christ, asks not an earthly, but an hea-
 venly kingdom. And there is need, in reality, of our continual prayer and
 supplication to God, that we forfeit not our interest, as the *Jews* have done,
 in this kingdom of heaven; of whose case, with its consequences, our Lord
 hath pronounced in the following manner: *Many* (saith he) *shall come from* Mat. 8. 11,
the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in 12.
the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into
outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: In which pas-
 sage he plainly intimates, that the *Jews* were once the *children of the king-*
dom, *viz.* so long as they continued to be the *children of God*; but as soon
 as ever they forfeited their *filial* relation, they forfeited with it their title to
 the *kingdom*. Wherefore we christians, who in their place and stead apply to
 God as our Father, pray to him likewise, that his *kingdom* may come.

8. We add in the next place our desire to God, that his *will may be done* §. 8.
in earth as it is in heaven; by which we mean not to express any inclina-
 tion, that God may do his own, but that *we* may do his will; since there is
 no one who can hinder God from doing what, or how, he pleases: But since
 the devil is always throwing in his obstacles to prevent the obedience of all
 our powers to the will of God, we intreat and beseech him, that his will may
 be done *in us*, and *by us*; and for this purpose the concurrence of his will,
viz. of his help and protection is necessary to us, because 'no man of himself
 is sufficient to help himself, but his preservation and safety must be all ascrib-
 ed to the mercy and grace of God. Thus our Lord hath given us a speci-
 men of the infirmities of that human nature which he put on, saying, *Father,* Mat. 16. 39:
if it be possible let this cup pass from me: But that he might likewise bequeath
 to his disciples an example of resigning their wills to God's, he presently sub-
 joined; *Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And again he hath
 elsewhere declared to the same purpose: *I came down from heaven not to do* John 6. 38.
mine own will, but the will of him who sent me. Since therefore the Son of
 God was thus exactly obedient to his Father's will, how much more should
 the servant be so to his master's will? Thus St. John hath also advised us, to
 do the will of God; *Love not the world, neither the things which are in* 1 John 2. 15:
the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:
For all which is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and
the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but of the lust of that world;
and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he who doth the will

[No man of himself sufficient.] A famous passage, this! in assertion of the doctrine, concerning the necessity of Grace and of inward succours; whereof *Augustine* afterwards made great use against the *Pelagians*, especially in his tract to *Boniface*. b. 4. ch. 9. Bp. Fell.

A. A. 252. of God abideth for ever; ^{even as God abideth for ever.} So that if we would abide for ever we must do the will of God, who abideth for ever.

§. 9.
In what the
will of God
doth consist.

9. Now the will of God is legible in the doctrine and example of Christ our Saviour, viz. an humility in our deportment, a steady perseverance in our faith, a reserve and modesty in our words, justice and charity in all our actions, a strictness and exactness in our whole behaviour; to have no notion of doing an injury, and to learn the wrong if it is done to us; to maintain peace and unity amongst one another; to love God with all our hearts; to love him, I say, as our Father, and at the same time to fear him as our God; to prefer nothing before Christ our Saviour, who preferred nothing before us; to abide in his love immovably, and to bear his cross with fidelity and courage; when the honour of his name is the thing disputed, then to confess it with constancy, as we have occasion to speak of it; to stand by it with confidence when put to the torture for it; and to bear the most cruel death with patience when called to it, in view of the crown held forth to such our perseverance. This is indeed to manifest our desire of being joint-heirs with Christ! This is truly to perform the commandments of God, and to fulfil the will of our Father which is in heaven.

§. 10.
That it must
be performed
both with our
bodies and
with our
souls.

10. Now we desire of God that his will may be done, as in heaven, so likewise on earth; both which are of great importance to our advantage and salvation; for we our selves do in some manner constitute that heaven and that earth, since our bodies are of a terrestrial, and our souls of a celestial extract; and our petition bears, that the will of God may be done in both, viz. in our souls, and in our bodies: For there is indeed a perpetual war, and a daily struggle between our flesh and spirit, insomuch that we do not what we would do; our spirit aspiring after those things which are above, whilst our flesh hankers after the things on earth: Wherefore our earnest request to God in this case is, that by his favourable assistance, these two jarring principles may be brought to some agreement with each other; and the soul, which thro' his grace is regenerate, may by these means be saved, whilst his will is done both in our bodies and in our spirits. This is at large declared by the apostle, where he tells us, That the flesh fighteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for that these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot (saith he) do the things which ye would. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, murders, enmities, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revelling, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, true elevation and greatness of soul, goodness, faith, meekness, continence and chastity. Wherefore we make it the subject of our instant and daily prayer to God, that the will of God, with respect to our own actions and dispositions, may be done both in heaven and earth; since it is the will of God, that earthly things should give place to heavenly; that things of a divine and spiritual nature, should always have, as they well deserve, the pre-eminence.

Galat. 5. 17.
18, 19, 20,
21, 22, 23.

[Even as God abideth for ever.] Our author had before quoted this passage in St. John's 1st epistle with this addition; 3^d b. of Testimonies, §. 11. As also with the other little variations, which the reader will observe in comparing mine with our common version.

[By his favourable assistance.] Here again the doctrine, which after our author's time was asserted by Pelagius, hath its contrary clearly laid down by our author, who imputes to God's gracious help, what Pelagius afterwards ascribed to man's native strength.

[True elevation and greatness of soul.] Magnanimitas is our author's word, instead of our present reading, μεγαθυμία and μεγαρομία, which we translate long suffering and gentleness. There is no doubt however but that these are contained and implied in a true greatness of soul; as continence and chastity are in the more generical term of temperance. Bishop Fell observes, that our author in citing this passage, doth always cite it in the order here given, and not according to our present range of it in our printed copies.

II. There

* 11. There is yet a farther sense, my beloved brethren, wherein we may understand this petition: For since our Lord hath commanded us to *love our enemies*; and to *pray for them who persecute us*; we should by that rule and reason pray also for them, who yet are mere *earth*, (have attained as yet no heavenly disposition) that the will of God may be done in them, which Christ hath gone so far towards fulfilling, by his great undertaking for the salvation of mankind. Our Lord, we know, hath called his disciples not *earth* it self, but the *salt of the earth*; and the apostle hath asserted the *first man to be of the earth*, but the *second of heaven*; wherefore we, following in this case the example of God himself, (*who maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust*) as well as the direction of our Lord Christ; (I say in conformity to the direction of the one and the example of the other,) we do so make our prayer to God, as to take in the interests of all mankind; that as the will of God is done in *heaven*, i. e. indeed in *us*, whose faith in God makes us (like the apostle's second man) to be of *heaven*; so, it may be done likewise in those who yet are *unbelievers*; that they who by their old birth are of the *earth earthy*, may by their new birth of *water and the spirit*, become heavenly.

* 12. We proceed yet farther in our prayer, and say, *Give us this day our daily bread*. Which may be understood either in a figurative or a literal sense; and in which way soever of these we take it, we may find our account in either acceptation. For Christ is indeed the bread of life, and he is not so to *all*, but to *us* only; wherefore as we say, *Our Father*, because God is the Father of such as know and believe on him; so we call this bread *our daily bread*, inasmuch as Christ is our bread; *ours*, I say, who stand so nearly related to him by a participation of his body. This bread we desire may be *daily* given us; by which we, who are in Christ, and so do every day receive the eucharistical elements for the nourishment of our souls unto eternal life, do express our fear of being separated from Christ, by the commission of some heinous sin, which should expose us to the dreadful sentence of excommunication; and thereby deprive us of that bread of heaven. Our Lord himself hath told us, saying, *I am the bread of life, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of my bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*. When therefore he saith, that *if any man will eat of his bread, he shall live for ever*, as it is evident that they are actually living, who are entitled to a participation of the holy eucharist, and in that awful rite receive into their hands his sacred body; so it is a fit subject of our prayer and caution, that we may not be separated from the body of Christ by the sentence of excommunication, which would bring us so near the very borders of everlasting ruin; our Lord having warned us to this purpose in his gospel.

[* 11.] In this and in the foregoing §. we may observe our author proceeding a little in the mystical way of interpretation; which Origen indulged to so much greater lengths. Our author is a clearer writer, and seldom goes far in this way, tho' he now and then touches upon it. In the *5th*, this way met with great acceptance; and St. Paul's comments upon, and applications of, diverse texts in the Old Testament, will look as odd to us at this distance, as the farthest fetched illustrations of the fathers; if we do not make the due allowances to these mystical excursions; which at that time were so much in request, and so much applauded.

[* 12.] This § is clear evidence of the practice of daily communion obtaining in our author's time. Tertullian before him, in his book of prayer, and Jerome after him in b. 3. against the *Pelagians*, symbolize with our author in this mystical interpretation. Bishop Fell.

[* By the commission of some heinous sin.] Which, whenever known, was always censured, and the guilty party was restrained from communion, for a shorter or longer time, as his sin was more or less heinous. What these sins were which this censure passed upon is distinctly handled in ch. 2. part 2. §. 1. of the *penitential discipline*; and in ch. 4. §. 2. of the same book, the practice of leaving the assembly before the eucharist, is shown to have been scandalous, and branded as such with a note of infamy.

[* Excommunication, which would bring us so near the very borders of everlasting ruin.] I hope the reader will hence observe, the terrible consequences which in those days were judged to follow a censure of the church; that it was what Tertullian before had called it in his apol. ch. 30. *excommunicatio*, *judicii praesidium*. An anticipation and preface of the sentence which would be passed at the day of judgment upon such crimes.

A. D. 252. saying, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* We desire therefore that our bread, *i. e.* Christ, may be daily given us; that we who live at present and abide in Christ, may go on to do so, may not lose those sanctifying influences which flow from his body, when received by such as are duly entitled to a participation of it.

John 6. 53. *That common bread may likewise be comprized in this petition.*

9. 13. 13. There is yet another interpretation to be made of this petition; and we may with propriety enough be understood to mean by it, a request to God, that he would furnish us with food convenient or sufficient for us; which is a very becoming desire from those, who in their solemn professions of the christian faith, have renounced the world, with all its pomps and riches, according to that declaration of our Lord; *Whoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* He therefore who upon these terms, enters into the service of Christ, and follows his Master's direction in forsaking all that he hath, should not extend his desires nor his cares beyond a provision for his *daily bread*, our Lord having in another passage of his gospel thus admonished us; *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* A disciple of Christ doth therefore ask with great congruity to his character for the food of a single day, as being forbidden to take any thought for the morrow: And it is indeed quite out of rule, and a direct repugnancy to our professions, who beseech Almighty God that his *kingdom may come*, to express at the same time any fondness for this world, or any desires of living a great while in it. Thus the apostle hath advised and instructed us, and thereby hath given great assistances to our faith and hope, saying; *We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out; wherefore having food and rayment, let us therewith be content. But they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil, which some coveting after have erred from the faith, and entangled themselves in many sorrows.* In which words he intimates, that riches are not only improper objects of desire, but that they are dangerous too; that they are the root of many flattering and delusive mischiefs, through which advantage is taken of our ignorance to deceive and hurt us: Wherefore we find God rebuking the foolish rich man in the gospel, who boasted of his great abundance, and vaunted much upon a view of his plentiful fortune; *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Great joy he had conceived to himself from the reflections he made upon his wealth and substance, when yet he was to die that very night, and the provision he was so fond of could be no longer serviceable, when the life they were to sustain was just upon the point of failing him. Our Lord hath recommended a quite contrary practice, and taught the man who would be perfect, to go and sell what he hath, and give it to the poor, that he may have treasure in heaven. Such a man (he saith) may follow him, and at an humble distance may share, to some degree, in the honour of his sufferings, who is freed from the trouble of worldly incumbrances, expedite and ready for any motion, and so follows his treasure, which he hath sent before him, to his heavenly master; which that we may all be prepared for, we are taught thus to pray, and from the tenour of our prayer, are instructed what we ought to be. For indeed it is impossible that a good man should be in want of his *daily bread*. It is expressly pro-

John 6. 53. *Except ye eat, &c.* The allusion which this text was so generally thought by the ancient fathers to bear to the holy eucharist, was in all likelihood the reason of their practice, with regard to infant-communion: And indeed if our Saviour meant it of the holy eucharist, there would be well-nigh as much reason for admitting infants to communion, as to baptism; the command, upon that supposal, being as general and peremptory for the one as for the other.

Solemn professions. *Viz.* Those made at baptism.

1 Tim. 6. 7, 8, 9, 10. See this passage cited, and its variations from our common reading noted in §. 61. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

mised,

misfed, *That the Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish.* A. D. 252.
 And again we find it written; *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.* Prov. 10. 3.
 And our Lord hath thus encouraged our dependence upon him in the following Psal. 37. 25.
 words; *Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things: But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* Matt. 6. 31, 32, 33.
 He promiseth (we see) that every thing else of this kind and nature shall be added to those who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness: For since all things are God's, he who hath God will have all things with him, if he on his part be not wanting in his duty to God. Thus^c when *Daniel* was shut up in the den of lions, by the command of the King, we read of a dinner prepared for him by the express appointment and direction of providence; and thus the man of God was fed and supported amongst hungry beasts, which had no power to hurt him. *Elijah*, we find, I Kin. 17. 6.
 was miraculously preserved in his retirement; the ravens supplied him with food, and birds ministered to him when the storm of a persecution had driven him into solitude; which suggests to us a fit occasion of observing with astonishment and abhorrence those excesses of cruelty which men exercise towards men like themselves; they savagely lie in wait for each other's lives, which even wild beasts have spared, and the birds of the air supported.

14. After this we go on to deprecate the vengeance of God against our sins, saying; *and forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors:* Next after the necessary refreshments of food and sustenance, we ask the pardon of our sins, that he who is fed by God, may also live in him; and that a due provision may be made, not only for the life which now is, but for that eternal life to which access for us is open, upon the remission of our sins; which our Lord hath here styled *debts*, as he hath elsewhere given them the like denomination, saying; *I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me.* Great is the wisdom, the necessity, and the advantage of being directed to beg pardon for our sins, and thereby to acknowledge our selves sinners: since whilst we thus ask forgiveness, our consciences are very profitably awakened into a sense of guilt. That no man may flatter himself with any pleasing notions of his own innocence (which is indeed no man's privilege, and by pretending to it he would really merit the greater damnation) therefore every man is here admonished and instructed to pray daily to God for *mercy*, which is a strong intimation to us all that we daily stand in need of it. St. *John* accordingly in his epistle thus advised us; *If we say that we have no sin we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.* I John 1. 8, 9.
 Both the points of privilege and of duty are herein comprehended; we are here directed to pray for the pardon of our sins, and we have the promise of forgiveness upon our thus asking it: And therefore he hath added, *God is faithful*, and so will forgive us, i. e. he will be just and true to the promise he hath made us of so forgiving us. For he who hath taught us to implore the mercies of God for the debts we have contracted to, and for the sins we have committed against him, hath likewise undertook, that those mercies shall not fail us, and that the *pardon* shall be granted upon our humble petition.

15. But to all these promises there is affixed a condition, which binds us to performance, and we can no otherwise ask the *forgiveness of our debts*, with any hope of a favourable audience, than as we forgive our debtors; we

^c When *Daniel* was shut up.] This piece of history is found in *Bel and the Dragon*, ch. 37. which was cut off from the end of that book, as not appearing in the Hebrew, though it does in the Greek, and is, accordingly, we see, acknowledged by our author. See note on §. 15. of the case of the lapid. [holy scriptures tells us.]

A.D. 252. are thence indeed assured, that we shall not obtain what we ask for, with regard to our own offences, except we deal out the same measure to those who have offended us. We are accordingly told by our Lord and Saviour in words express, that *with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again.* And we may observe moreover in the gospel, that the servant who had all his debt forgiven him by his master, and afterwards would not forgive his fellow-servant, was cast into prison. And what Christ hath thus hinted to us in the way of figure and parable, he hath moreover confirmed by the weight and authority of express precept; *When ye stand (saith he) praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses: But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.* There will be no excuse, and you will have nothing to complain of at the day of judgment, when the sentence you have passed upon others shall light upon your own head, and you suffer precisely in your own person, what you have determined to be just and equitable in the case of others. The will of God concerning us is, that we should be of one mind in his house, and live together in peace and unity; and such as our second birth hath made us, such he would have us continue; as we then commenced the children of God, he would therefore obtain of us to abide in his peace; and as we are united together by one Spirit, it is fit we should be like-minded, and agree together in one common sentiment. Thus we are admonished, that God will not accept the offering of a man who is at enmity with his brother, but bids him *go his way, and be first reconciled to his brother,* that God may favourably hear his prayer, when offered up to him with pacifick dispositions. The sacrifice indeed which is most acceptable to God, is our mutual agreement and brotherly love, and such an union of christian people to each other, as may in some measure resemble that strict inseparable unity, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In those early examples of sacrifice offered to God by *Cain and Abel*, we do not find that their gifts were so much regarded, as their hearts; and his oblations were best accepted, whose dispositions were best approved. The mild and righteous *Abel* came before God with a pure and perfect heart; and hath taught us therefore to bring our gifts to the altar, as he did, with a fear of God accompanying us, with upright hearts, like his; and with the strictest regard to righteousness and peace. He, who offered such a sacrifice to God, well deserved the subsequent honour which was conferred upon him, of being offered up (himself) a sacrifice to God; of leading the van in the glorious company of martyrs; and of being the first fruits of those who should afterwards follow our Lord in his passion, as having beforehand resembled him, in his peaceable and righteous dispositions. Such as he, are the men to whom our Lord allows the privilege of the martyr's crown; these are they whose blood, as well as their Lord's and Master's, is to be avenged in the day of judgment. But he, who lives at enmity with his brethren, cannot atone for the guilt of his sin, as the apostle hath expressly declared, no not by suffering for the name of Christ; since it is also written, *That he who hateth his brother is a murderer;* and a murderer cannot live with God, or have any part in the kingdom of heaven. It is impossible he should dwell with Christ, who chooses rather to imitate *Judas* than his Master: And what sort of guilt must that be, which the baptism of blood cannot wash away? How heinous must be that crime, which even martyrdom it self is not allowed to expiate?

§. 16. Our Lord hath farther taught us to add another very necessary petition to our prayer: *And suffer us not to be led into temptation.* An intimation this!

1 Cor. 13. 3.

1 John 3. 15.

§. 16.

We farther desire, not to be led into temptation.

[Whose blood is to be avenged.] Here our author seems to allude to the cry of the souls under the altar, which the reader may find in *Revelat. 6. 9. 10.*

[Suffer us not to be led.] Here our author seems to have given his master's (*Tertullian's*) comment a place in his text: For *Tertullian* had said, in his book of prayer, *Lead us not into temptation; i. e. suffer*

this! that our adversary hath no power to hurt us, but with God's permission; which is therefore a reason why all our fear, observance, and devotion, should center in God; inasmuch as the Evil one can do nothing against us in any of our temptations, but what he is expressly licensed to do from heaven. Thus the holy scripture hath told us, That *Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, came against Jerusalem, and took it, and God gave it into his hand.* And that the power of the tempter over us increases in proportion to our sins, we may fairly infer from that passage of holy writ, which puts the following question; *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, against whom they sinned? He, in whose ways they would not walk, neither would they be obedient unto his law: Wherefore he poured upon them the fury of his anger.* And when Solomon had sinned, and forsaken the commandments and the ways of God, it is said, That *God raised upⁱ satan* (or an adversary) *against Solomon.* Now there is a two-fold power given to the tempter; either by way of punishment for our sins, or by way of test and proof, which when we abide, it contributes to the immortal honour of our virtue: Thus, we read, it sared with holy *Job*, whose case is thus represented to us by God himself, saying to satan; *Behold, all which he hath I give into thy power, only upon himself put not forth thy hand.* And our Lord just before his passion accosted *Pilate* to this same purpose; *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.* Wherefore when we beg of God, that *we may not enter into temptation*, we are very powerfully thence reminded of our frailty and infirmity; and taught to assume nothing to our selves with pride and sufficiency, not even the honour we may have gained from confessing the name of Christ, or from suffering for it; since our Lord hath so strongly recommended to us an humble frame of mind, where he saith; *Watch, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; the Spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.* Thus when a submissive acknowledgment of our weakness is the harbinger of our prayer, and whatever we have or are, is ascribed to God as its author and fountain, there is the more likelihood of our gaining, from his benignity and bounty, what we desire of him, with a religious fear, and with a becoming reverence and honour for his holy name.

17. We proceed, and subjoin, at the close of our prayer a petition, which sums up the matter of all the foregoing ones in one brief sentence; and thus we add in the conclusion; *but deliver us from evil*; herein comprizing all those kinds of mischief which our grand adversary hatches against us in this world: ^{§. 17.} *from which, if God delivers us, if our prayer and supplication derive upon us his powerful succour, we may (then indeed, and not otherwise) hope for security and protection: Wherefore when we say, but deliver us from evil,* there is nothing farther which we need demand, after having implored the protection of God against our great enemy; which when once we have obtained, we may thenceforwards hold our selves secure from every thing which

Finally we ask of God, that he would deliver us from evil.

for us not to be led into it by the tempter. Far be it from us to think, that our Lord himself should tempt us, as either wanting to know the strength of our faith, or as having any intention to weaken or demolish it! Bishop Fell.

^h And took it, and God gave it into his hand.] This is not now read so in our copies of the LXX, which yet was the version used by our author; but as the 2^d and 3^d verses expressly ascribe the misfortunes of *Josiah* the father to the immediate hand of God, so (it should seem) our author took the liberty here of making this construction of *Jehoiakim* the son's.

ⁱ Satan.] See note on §. 80. in the 3^d book of *Testimonies*, where *satan* is observed to be the general name of any adversary.

^k John 19. 11.] See note on §. 80. of the 3^d book of *Testimonies*, where this text is cited, and the application of it explained.

From which if God deliver us, &c.] Tho' I ordinarily follow the edition of the late very reverend and learned bishop Fell, yet here I prefer the reading of *Rigaltius*, as most natural and intelligible. The learned reader (if this translation should fall into any such hands) shall have them both. Bishop Fell reads the passage thus; *A quibus non potest esse fida & firma tutela, si nos Deus liberet, nisi deprecantibus atque implorantibus opem suam praestet.* *Rigaltius* thus; *A quibus potest esse fida & firma tutela, si nos Deus liberet, si deprecantibus atque implorantibus opem suam praestet.*

A. D. 252. either the world or the devil can do against us. For what can he have to fear from the world, who hath God for his guardian and protector in it? Or where, my brethren, is the wonder, if the prayer which God himself hath taught us, do thus briefly comprize in it, whatever can be the proper subject of our addresses to the throne of Grace? What the Holy Ghost before had spoken by the mouth of the prophet *Isaiab.*, may not unfitly be referred to this excellent prayer, where speaking of the majesty and mercy of God, he mentions ^m the consummating and briefly finishing a word in righteousness; for that God would make a short and compendious word throughout all the earth. For as our Lord Jesus Christ, the word of God, came to and for the sake of all (the unlearned as well as the learned) and directed his saying precepts to people of each sex, and of every age; so he hath reduced them to a short and easy compass, that none might find a difficulty in learning or remembering them. Thus when he was telling his disciples what life eternal is, he described that important blessing to them in terms of great brevity and easy comprehension; *This* (saith he) *is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Thus also when he was singling out of the law and the prophets, the commandments of greatest use and moment in them, he represented them very brief in the following manner; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment: And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self: On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* And again to the same purpose; ⁿ *All good things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.*

§. 18. Nor did our Lord by words only instruct us how to pray, but by deeds also; himself often praying and making intercession, and teaching us by his example what would be fit for us to do. Thus it is written of him; *That he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed.* And again; *That he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* If he therefore was thus frequent and fervent in his prayer to God, who was without sin; how much more ought sinners to be so? If he watched whole nights, and spent them in religious offices, how much more ought we to do so? Now our Lord when he prayed did it not for himself (for how could perfect innocence stand in need of using any supplications?) but he prayed for us and for our sins, as he told *Peter*, saying unto him; *Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* And in another place we find him making intercession for all, and saying; *I pray not for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one.* Great indeed was the benignity and concern of our Lord and master for us and our salvation, who thought it not enough to redeem us only, but hath asked for us somewhat greater, if possible, than so great a blessing. Wherefore observe, I beseech you, the importance of his request for us, that as the Father and Son are one, so we also may abide in the same unity, and be one as they are: From whence by the way, we may fairly and properly infer the heinousness of their guilt, who make any breach in this peace, or any schism in this unity; since our blessed Lord hath asked it of his Father, that we might abide in this

§. 18.
That our Lord
hath taught
us to pray as
well by ex-
ample as by
precept.

Luk. 5. 16.
Luk. 6. 12.

Luk. 22. 31,
32.

John 17. 20,
21.

^m The consummating and briefly finishing a word, &c.] Our author herein follows the version of the LXX, and is supported in his application of the passage to our blessed Lord by *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Jerom*, and in some measure, though not exactly in our author's manner, even by *St. Paul* himself. *Rom.* 9. 28. *Bp. Fell.* See this passage cited and noted in §. 3. of the 2^d book of testimonies.

ⁿ All good things.] So our author renders the *ῥαῖα ὅσα* of the Greek, as if *ayata* were understood there. *Bp. Fell.*

peace and unity, as knowing its importance to our final happiness, and that no discord nor variance can ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. A. D. 252.

19. When we *stand* therefore *praying*, my beloved brethren, our hearts should be fixed entirely upon the work which employs us; all carnal and worldly thoughts should be then withdrawn, and nothing should then be suffered to entertain our minds but the subject of our prayer. Accordingly we may observe of the person who officiates in our publick worship, that he prepares the minds of our brethren for the holy work upon which they are entering, by prefacing his prayer with a *lift up your hearts*; that so in the answer which they are directed to return to him, (*we lift them up unto the Lord*) they may be reminded of their obligation to think upon him only. The avenues of our Souls should be all locked up from God's and our enemy; and God alone should have access to them; the enemy is ever and anon attempting to steal upon us, and by various arts to hinder the ascent of our prayers to the throne of grace; so that through his subtle stratagems it frequently comes to pass, that we speak one thing and mean another; whereas indeed our prayer should rather come from our hearts than lips: But now what a strange degree of indolence and sloth must possess us, when we suffer our minds to be thus alienated from their proper business, and led aside from it by thoughts and imaginations which no way belong to it; as if there were any thing more truly deserving our accuracy and attention, than the correspondence we are at such time holding with God? As if we could expect to be heard when we will not hear? Or as if it were reasonable to believe that God will be mindful of us when we forget our selves, and the business we are engaged in? This indeed is to be supremely negligent of our enemy; to offend the majesty of God by our rude and careless approaches, when at the same time we profess to implore his mercy; to be asleep in our hearts when yet our eyes are open; whereas the reverse of this, *viz.* the wakefulness of the heart, when his eyes are slumbering, is really the proper test and character of a christian; for the church is introduced in holy scripture, saying, *I sleep but my heart waketh*; and the apostle is very solicitous and pressing in this matter, recommending it to us with all earnestness to *continue in prayer, and to watch in the same*; whereby he fairly intimates, that they are the most likely to obtain what they ask of God, whom he observes to be instant, and to watch in prayer. *That attention of mind is necessary in prayer.* §. 19.

20. But then our prayers should not ascend up empty nor unattended to the throne of grace, which is by no means the way to render them successful; for since we are told, that *every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire*; upon the same foundations of reason it may well be presumed that every word which we speak to God will be unacceptable, which is barren and fruitless, and unaccompanied with good works. The holy scripture therefore hath aptly here reminded us, that *prayer is good with fasting and alms*; for he who in the day of judgment shall assign to works of righteousness and charity their proper recompence, is at present a favourable hearer of that prayer which comes recommended to him by those works. By these means *Cornelius* found favour with God, and had his prayer heard: *Tis*

° *Lift up your hearts.* To what hath been already noted in §. 3. of this book [*needless multiplicity of words*] may here be added the manifest tokens which this passage gives us of a known form being used in publick worship, when our author wrote; he could not else have alluded to any particular usage, or have mentioned it as a thing which was current and established. *Cyril* [in *Catech. Mystag.* 4.] hath specified this, and subjoined to it (as *Bp. Bell* observes) another formulary, which in his time was used by the person officiating, and which we still retain, as we do the *sursum corda*, *viz.* *Let us give thanks unto the Lord*; to which the people responded, *it is meet and right so to do.* *P. Tobit* 12. 8. *Holy scripture* Observe again here, that our author styles the book of *Tobit* holy scripture, *scriptura divina*, which is an appellation, as high and honourable, as any given by him, to the most unquestionable writings within the canon. See, however, a distinction made by him between the book of *Tobit*, and books more unquestionably within the canon, in §. 4. of the tract [*concerning alms and good works.*] Note, [by the testimony of truth it self.] He might therefore call it *scriptura divina* in regard

A. D. 252. 'Tis said of him, that he gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God
Acts 10. 2, 3, 4. always; and to this man an angel appeared about the ninth hour of the day,
 bearing honourable testimony of his good works, and saying unto him, *Corne-
 lius, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.*
 From whence we may gather that our prayers have a speedy and sure access
 to God, when they are carried up to him by works of mercy. In like man-
 ner we find the angel *Raphael* bearing testimony to good *Tobit*, who was
 equally remarkable for his prayers and alms; him we read the angel thus ac-
 costing; *It is honourable to reveal the works of God. Now therefore when
 Tob. 12. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. thou didst pray, and Sarah thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remem-
 brance of your prayers before the Holy One; and when thou in the inte-
 grity of thine heart didst bury the dead; and didst not delay to rise up and
 leave thy dinner, but didst go and cover the dead, I was sent to prove thee
 first, and afterwards to heal thee, and Sarah thy daughter-in-law; I am
 Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which go in and out before the glory
 of the Holy One.* Thus also the Lord hath spoken by the mouth of his pro-
 phet *Isaiah*: *Loose (saith he) the bands of wickedness, leave off all rigorous
 and oppressive dealings; give rest to such as are wearied and harrassed, and
 cancel all unequitable obligations; distribute thy bread to the hungry; bring
 the poor, who are cast out, into thine house; when thou seest the naked,
 cloath him; and despise not thine own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth
 as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy
 righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy re-
 ward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry,
 and he shall say, Here I am.* In which words we have an expresse promise
 from God, that he will be favourably present with those who loose the bands
 of wickedness, and deal out their alms to his household, according to his com-
 mand; and that he will incline his ear to such as hearken to his voice. The
 holy apostle *St. Paul* hath called the succours which he received from the
 brethren in a time of distress, the sacrifices of God; *I am full, (saith he) ha-
 ving received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an
 odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing unto God.*
Philipp. 4. 18. For when a man hath pity upon the poor, he lendeth to the Lord at interest;
Prov. 19. 17. and he who sheweth mercy in the least instances, sheweth it unto God, sacrific-
 eth unto God an odour of a sweet smell.
 §. 21. Now for the more solemn acts of worship to God, we find, that *Da-
 niel*, with the three famous youths, (so renowned for the constancy of their
 faith, and the victory it obtained for them, even under their confinement)
 observed more especially the third, the sixth, and the ninth hours; three
 remarkable distinctions, with some eye of allusion and regard to the blessed

regard to the opinion conceived of it, by the hellenistick Jews, which it was not here his business to
 dispute. How far this condescension to them in not disputing with them the honour of those books
 which they esteemed canonical (how far, I say, this) may account for certain high appellations given
 to the wisdom of Solomon, to the book of *Ecclesiasticus*, to the apocryphal epistle of *Jeremiah*, &c. is
 left to the reader's judgment and determination. See note on §. 3. of this book [*Holy Ghost by the
 mouth of Jeremiah suggested.*]

§. In the integrity of thine heart.] *Simpliciter*. Which, as bishop *Fell* very probably conjectures, should
 be *similiter*, agreeable to the LXX's *ἀπλῶς*; but since he observes that all MSS. read it *simpliciter*,
 and our author himself in the next tract of the *Plague* reads it so again, he is for abiding by what he
 finds; and so am I.

To prove thee first, and afterwards, &c.] The LXX at present omit this; but the *Syriac* version shews
 the passage to have been formerly in use; the meaning of the angel's saying he was sent to prove *To-
 bit* first, must refer to his blindness; which here the angel takes upon himself, as immediately after he
 takes the cure likewise. Bishop *Fell*.

Thine health.] See note on §. 1. of the 3^d book of *Testimonies*.
 The third, the sixth, and the ninth hours.] *Tertullian* in his book of *fasts*, ch. 10. hath taken particu-
 lar notice of these three distinctions in the hours of prayer, as well as our author. Bishop *Fell*.

With some eye of allusion and regard to the Blessed Trinity.] No one should wonder that the word
Trinity is found so early. We have expresse mention of it, and much in our author's manner, from
Theophilus of *Antioch*, a writer of the 2^d century, in his 2^d book to *Autolyce*. *ἀνάγνωσται δὲ αὐτῷ τῶν ἁγίων
 τῶν ὁρίων ὑμῶν τὴν εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων.* See note on *sufrage* 9. [of the
 council of *Carthage*.]

Trinity, which was afterwards to be revealed to the world in these latter days: For the first hour advancing to the third, gives us one notion of a Trinity; the fourth proceeding to the sixth gives us another; and last of all the seventh carried on to the ninth, exhibits the perfection of the ternary number. Which several spaces or intervals of time, were antiently fixed upon by the worshippers of God, it may be, not without his special direction, for the stated hours of devotion; and in succeeding times it was known with what allusions and regards holy men were moved to make such a choice. About the third hour of the day, we learn that the Holy Ghost descended upon the disciples, in answer to the promise made them by our Saviour. *St. Peter* about the sixth hour, *went up upon the house to pray*, and then and there was taught by a sign from heaven, and by the voice of our Lord himself, to admit all nations into his church by baptism, when he had been before in some doubt, whether the Gentiles were to be admitted or not. Our Lord was also crucified about the sixth hour; and about the ninth, he ^{was} washed away our sins by his blood, and finished then his victorious passion, where- by he redeemed and quickened us. But now, my beloved, besides what were observed in former ages, the hours of prayer are increased upon us; as those mysteries and mercies have been multiplied; to which they may severally be supposed allusive: For the morning is sacred with us to the purposes of devotion, in a pious remembrance of our Lord's early resurrection. Which was long ago hinted to us by the holy *psalmist*, saying; *My King, and my God, to thee will I pray; my voice shalt thou hear in the morning; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And by the prophet thus; *They will seek me early in the morning, saying, Come, and let us return unto the Lord.* And, at sun-set, when the day shuts in, we are again obliged to put up our prayers to God. For since Christ is the true sun and day-spring from on high, the close of the natural day very properly reminds us to ask of God, that his heavenly light may descend upon us, and that Christ may once more be sent down amongst us, to bless us with his never-dying light. Now that Christ is called the *Day*, the Spirit of God hath, not obscurely, notified in the book of *psalms*, where we thus read; *The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner; * it was made by God, and it is marvellous in our eyes: † This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us walk in it and be glad.* And that he is likewise stiled the *Sun*, we may appeal for proof to the testimony of the prophet *Malachi*; *Unto you who fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.* Wherefore if Christ be in scripture-language the true *Sun* and the true *Day*, there can be no hour with christians exempt from the duty of worshipping God; but we, who profess to be in Christ and to abide in him, who is indeed the sun and the day to us, should continue all day in prayer to him; and when night comes on in its appointed course, we should consider that the darkness of the night can bring no harm along with it, to such as it finds employed in the offices of holy devotion; and indeed to the children of light, the night is as clear as the day it self. For he whose heart is once illuminated, can never surely complain, that he is in any want of light. He who hath Christ for his light and his day, can in no sense nor season be thought destitute of *either*: We therefore who are in Christ, *i.e.* in the light, should never urge the darkness as a reason for the discontinuance of our prayers. Thus the widow *Anna* continued watching in the temple,

* *Washed away our sins by his blood.*] Observe here the expiatory nature of our Saviour's sufferings asserted.

* *It was made by God.*] *Ἐκείνου αἵματος* say the LXX. See note on §. 6. of the 2^d book of *Testimonies*.

† *This is the Day.*] Our author in the place above referred to hath cited this passage in proof of our Lord's being called a *Stone*; here he quotes it in proof of his being called the *Day*; wherein it must be confessed that he is a little singular; tho' the appellation of *Day*, may otherwise be proved belonging to our Saviour. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 115.
Luke 2. 37.

and praying without intermission, as we find it written of her in the gospel, which saith, *That she departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.* Let the Gentiles therefore look to it, who want, as yet, this salutary light; and let the Jews take heed, who have forsaken it, and therefore abide in darkness. For our selves, my beloved brethren, who are always in the light, and are well aware of the advantages we derive from our holy profession; in this point of prayer let us make no difference between the night and the day: We should ever imagine that we have the light before us, and should not therefore suffer the darkness, out of which we have escaped, to prove any farther hindrance to us. Accordingly the night should not diminish our devotions; slumber and sleep should not take off from them. Being born again thro' the grace of God, and renewed in the spirit of our minds, we should anticipate some part of our future employment, and behave, as we shall do, in the kingdom of God; *where*, as there shall be no night to interrupt our perpetual day, so we should *here*, in conformity to that blessed state, be ² wakeful in the *night* as we are in the *day*; and since *there* we shall be always engaged in the happy employment of praying to God, and praising him; we should *here* beforehand inure our selves to the delightful exercise, praying to God, and praising him, without weariness or intermission.

² *Wakeful in the night as in the day.*] That the Christians held their solemn assemblies for worship before day, Pliny acquainted the emperor Trajan, calling them *antelucanos catus*, as Tertullian had called them *nocturnas convocationes*. *ad uxor.* lib. 2. c. 4. But they had also their nocturnal watchings on the score of private devotion, on occasion of which Tertullian had said in commendation of the christian's temperance, that they eat their suppers like people who remembered that they were to worship God in the night-time. In *Apol.* c. 39. (Bp. Fell.) To which I add, that Clemens Alexandrinus in *Strom.* b. 7. hath mentioned as usual, songs to God in the night. *Ἄλλα δὲ νύκτε ὁμοῖαι ᾠδαί.* And Tertullian in his 2^d book, 4th chap. to his wife, hath mentioned the whole night as usually passed in devotion on the eve of Easter; though this last passage, in all likelihood, did rather allude to publick than private worship.



Of



Of the PLAGUE.

This distemper having spread it self from Arabia into Egypt, and thence to Africa, and making great havock there among all ranks and professions of men, our author thought it incumbent on him to write the following (consolatory) discourse to his flock, that they might not be too much dejected under this double affliction, for famine was also added to the plague; and there was moreover very imminent danger from a persecution hanging over their heads: all which circumstances we shall find our author touching, with his usual spirit, in the body of this work. Gallus and Volusianus were emperors when these evils happened, the christians had just got breath from a persecution begun amongst them a little before, and renewed soon after; so that the plague and the famine were intermediate afflictions to exercise their faith and patience, and we shall presently see what reflections our author makes upon these several circumstances, and to what useful purposes he applies them.



I AM very sensible, my beloved brethren, that many of you are so well fortified, by the powers of your faith and hope, and your religious affiance in God, that the present mortality is not able to make upon you any disadvantageous impressions; whilst these trials of your christian courage do rather approve than overthrow it; and all the rude shocks which you receive from a boisterous world, rebound from your minds, as the waves do from a rock, without impairing its firmness, only dashing against it with a force which turns upon themselves, and makes them fly off in froth and foam: yet though this be generally, and for the most part true of you; I cannot but observe, that some of my flock, either through weakness of mind, or want of faith, or an attachment to the pleasures of life, or the delicacy of their sex, or (which is more than all the rest) through some misapprehensions concerning the great truths of the gospel, are shocked with this great calamity; and do not exert themselves with that spirit and constancy which might so reasonably be expected from their principles and professions; and therefore upon this view of the case, I thought it incumbent on me to say somewhat to it, and to employ my best endeavours upon rowzing their dormant courage, and their drooping spirits, by exhortations and encouragements taken from the book of God; that so the man who hath devoted himself to the service of God and Christ, may be taught to behave as becomes such an honourable relation: For he who serves in the christian warfare, and hath entered his name upon the muster-roll of our head and captain, Christ Jesus, should consider with himself, my beloved brethren, what obligations he is thence engaged in, and how all his thoughts and affections should be taken off from this world and fixed upon another; and therefore no storms nor tempests which he may here encounter, should ever be suffered to ruffle or disconcert him, or find him at any time unprepared to cope with them;

inasmuch

§. 1.
That it is of great consequence in afflictions to consider that they are foretold to us.

A. D. 252. inasmuch as our Lord hath indeed given his people a proper warning of all these incidents, hath foretold them all, and thereby hath fortified the minds of his followers, that they might be able to bear whatever should happen to them, either by earthquakes, pestilence, famine or the sword. And that we might not be surprized or over-born by any sudden or unexpected calamities, he hath expressly moreover taught and admonished us, that all these mischiefs should increase upon us more and more in the latter days; and now behold his predictions verified! Wherefore since those things are come to pass which were foretold by him, those things which he hath *promised* will as surely be accomplished in their proper season: And our Lord, we may observe, hath

Luke 21. 31. given us here the cue when we may expect them, saying; *When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*

§. 2.
That afflictions argue the kingdom of God to be near.

2. The kingdom of God, my brethren, is plainly then nigh at hand, and with it the joyful recompence of life eternal, everlasting gladness, and that happy state of paradise which we had so lately forfeited; (these all) are making their approaches towards us, by the same steps and paces wherewith this world is fleeting from us: And then we shall make that blessed advantageous exchange of earthly things for heavenly, of mean and trivial gratifications for joys too great for our hearts to conceive, of a transient and momentary state for one which will abide for ever! What room or pretence can then be left for any melancholy surmises, or misgiving apprehensions? Under such circumstances, *who* can have any damp or flutter upon his spirits, whose faith and hope are not in some manner deficient? No man should indeed be afraid of death, *but he who is loth to go to Christ; nor can any man be loth to go to Christ, but he who hath reason to fear that he shall have no part nor lot with Christ in his kingdom. It is written, that *the just shall live by faith*; if then you are one of those just ones, and as such do live by faith, and do really believe in God, why are you not overjoyed at receiving your summons to be with Christ, in a full dependence upon the truth of his promises; which, when once they are accomplished, will secure you for ever from the power of the devil? It had been revealed from heaven to good old *Simeon*, (that true believer unto righteousness) *that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ*; wherefore when Christ was brought to the temple in the arms of his mother, he presently knew by the Spirit that the person then was born, who had been so foretold to him, and that himself should die immediately after seeing him. Thus rejoicing in the approaches of his own dissolution, and nothing doubting of his favourable reception in a better world, *he took the child up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* In which words he hath plainly and clearly intimated, that the servants of God are then only secure of peace and undisturbed repose, when

Rom. 1. 17.

Luke 2. 26.

Ibid. 28, 29, 30.

* But he who is loth to go to Christ.] There would be no conclusiveness in this reasoning, nor in that of §. 4. except our author had been of St. Paul's opinion, that immediately upon a good man's dissolution, he went to Christ, *Philip. 1. 23.* and *2 Cor. 5. 1, 6.* and indeed our author elsewhere in his tract to *Demetrian*, §. 12. hath given us his sense upon this question very clearly, where he saith: *Till upon the conclusion of this transient life we are assigned to separate mansions; either of everlasting destruction, or of life immortal.* And again a little farther, §. 16. *When we go hence, there is no room for repentance, nor any possibility of atoning for our sins by penitential satisfactions; here, or no where, must be laid the foundation of life eternal.* Which is a way of speaking, entirely exclusive of all purgatory notions, and plainly shewing the inefficacy of any thing which could be done for a man's advantage after his departure hence. (Bishop Fell.) See note on §. 10. Yet going to Christ, whatever was implied in it, did not certainly imply that fulness of bliss, which was to be the portion of good men after the day of judgment. They exchanged this world for a better, and had nearer views than are here attainable, of what was designed for them at the resurrection of the just: But still many of those who were to have their part in that resurrection, might have no direct and absolute assurances, tho' they might have great and well-founded hopes. An immediate entrance upon the joy of their Lord, seems to have been considered by primitive writers, as the martyr's privilege; and none but men of the most consummate virtue, were thought absolutely secure of their interest in the resurrection of the just; tho' the different degrees of their hope concerning it were conceived to make up the greater or less degrees of their happiness; of which all were judged to have a sufficient measure, to render the exchange desirable.

they are got out from the storms and hurricanes of this world, and have made to the haven of everlasting rest; when upon the swallowing up of death in victory, their mortal hath put on a blessed immortality. A. D. 252.

3. Hence only can we indeed expect any durable peace, repose, or safety: For as to this world, it is a state of perpetual conflict and struggle with our ghostly enemy, and we are always upon the defensive against his various assaults. Covetousness, incontinence, wrath and ambition, do all attack us. The lusts of the flesh, and the several allurements of the world, are ever seeking some advantage against us. The mind of man surrounded thus with a whole troop of temptations, and always attacked by some of them, cannot be every where at once, and therefore doth with great difficulty maintain its ground against such numerous and potent enemies. If covetousness be repulsed, lust takes its post, and renews the onset; if lust be worsted, ambition steps into its place; or if ambition proves too weak to gain upon us, either pride, or anger, or wine, or envy, or a peevish emulation, are, some or other of them, ready to enter at an unguarded pass, and to assist the tempter, who had here, or there, been defeated. At one time you are perhaps commanded^b to blaspheme Christ, at another, to take an unlawful oath. Such and so endless are the dangers and tribulations to which christians are here obnoxious; and yet they^c take pleasure in standing continually thus exposed as a mark and butt for our grand adversary to shoot at; whereas it is indeed infinitely more desirable to be dispatched to Christ, by the help of a speedier death; when he hath beforehand told us what we are to expect, from our continuance in this vale of tears, and what from our removal out of it; *Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Who now would not be glad to be rid of sorrow? Who would not hasten to joy with the utmost alacrity? But now the time when our sorrow shall thus be turned into joy, our Lord hath clearly signified to us, where he saith, *I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.* Since then to see Christ, is to rejoice, and we can have no true joy, till we do see Christ; what madness and infatuation is it, to be in love with afflictions and pressures, and the troubles of this life, and not rather to hasten towards that joy, which can never be taken from us? S. 3. That no security nor lasting rest is to be expected but from death.

4. All this, my brethren, proceeds from a want of faith; because the promises of God are not believed, who is faithful and true, and whose word will surely be made good to those who trust in it. If a man of gravity and known integrity should pass his word to you for any thing, you would undoubtedly give him credit, and would never imagine or suspect, that he had any design to impose upon you, of whose veracity in his words and dealings you were otherwise well satisfied: And how then can you suffer your self to be in suspense and doubts, when God hath passed his word to you? God hath promised you life and immortality upon your leaving this world; and can you then possibly doubt of his performance? *This* were a confession, that you know not God: *This* were to offend against Christ (who is the Lord and Master of all true believers) by a criminal incredulity: *This* were to be void of all faith, whilst yet you pretend to retain a place in the church, which is S. 4. That our great aversion to death, doth really proceed from a want of faith.

^a To blaspheme Christ, and to take an unlawful oath.] So the proconsul (as we are told by Eusebius b. 4. Hist. Eccles. ch. 15.) commanded St. Polycarp; who replied; *These eighty-six years have I served him, and he never used me hardly; and how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?* So again the same proconsul (as we read in the place afore cited) ordered the same holy martyr, *To swear by the fortune of Cæsar;* to which he presently replied; *I tell you plainly that I am a christian;* thereby intimating that it was not lawful for him so to swear. So Tertullian saith of christians; *That tho' they could not swear by the genii of the Cæsars, yet they could and did, by that God, who was their proper guardian and protector, and was infinitely more to be revered than all their genii.* Apol. ch. 32. Bishop Fell. ^c Take pleasure.] I follow here Rigaltius's reading, who hath it *delectat hic inter diaboli gladios discurrere*; for as to our right reverend editor, whom I ordinarily follow, I know not what to make of his *delicta*, which I suppose to be an error of the press, tho' it be not specified among his *emendanda*.

A. D. 252. the house of faith: Now how very advantageous, a removal hence, will be to us, Christ himself, who is the captain of our salvation, and our great leader in every thing tending to our benefit, hath plainly shewed us; who, when his disciples were discouraged with the news he had communicated to them of his design to leave them, addressed himself to them in the following manner;
 John 14. 28. *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father;* therein strongly hinting to us, that when our nearest and dearest friends depart this life, we should rather rejoice than mourn for their happy exchange.
 Philip. 2. 21. *And St. Paul is plainly of the same opinion, where he saith, To me to live, is Christ; and to dye is gain:* He counted it gain to be disengaged from the various allurements of the world, to continue no longer in a state which made him liable to sin, and exposed him to the assaults of his fleshly lusts; he esteemed it a blessed improvement of his circumstances, to be removed out of the way of pressures and afflictions, out of the jaws of the lion, and the several attacks of his ghostly enemy; and to obey the call of his Saviour Christ, summoning him to enter upon the joys of everlasting salvation.

§. 5. Some are hence staggered, that the contagion of this distemper should spread it self amongst our people, as well as amongst the Gentiles; as if the great end of a christian's faith, were his exemption from a share in common calamities, and an undisturbed enjoyment of this world's comforts; whereas the contrary is indeed is his lot, and his pleasures are all in reversion, whilst he is exposed at present to all sorts of sufferings and sorrows. Many expect that we should be excepted out of the general rule, and that the destroying angel should hold his hand, and not involve us in the common destruction; not considering that every thing in this world is, and must be, common to us with the rest of its inhabitants, as long as we are subject to the law of our common birth, and continue to be clothed with the same flesh and blood. Wherefore whilst this common receptacle retains and holds us, its privileges and disadvantages must needs extend alike to us, and our bodies must take their fare from the same common incidents, tho' the condition of our souls admits at the same time of a very great diversity; in which at last, and in which alone, consists the point of difference between christians and other men. So that till *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality*, and the Spirit [which we received at our baptism] shall have led us to God, we with the rest of mankind must share alike in those common inconveniences, to which the frame of our bodies doth equally expose us. Thus the barrenness of the earth makes all alike partakers in the distresses of a famine; and when a city is taken by storm, all its inhabitants, without distinction, fall into the hands of the enemy. When a continued calm and sun-shine withhold the rain from refreshing the ground, all feel the drought without exception; and when a ship is dashed against a rock, the wreck is universal, and all who are embarked in the same bottom suffer it. Thus soreness of eyes, pains in the limbs, and the rage of fevers, affect us equally with the rest of mankind, whilst we all alike contract the same causes of those several distempers, and carry about within us bodies of the same make and constitution. Besides; if a christian would impartially consider the terms whereupon he entered into the service of his master, he would find himself obliged by them to a larger measure of labour and travel than the rest of mankind, as having more difficulties, than they, to encounter from the necessary struggles with his grand adversary the devil. The holy scripture hath foretold this to him, and fore-armed him against it, saying; *My son if thou come to serve the Lord, stand before him with righteousness and godly fear, and prepare thy soul for*

Eccles. 2. 1.

^d Holy scripture. Scriptura divina. Observe here again what an exalted title is given by our author to the book of Ecclesiasticus.

^e Stand before him with righteousness and godly fear. Sta in justitia & timore. The LXX have not these words, but the vulgar Latin hath them, though I cannot find from what authority it could take them.

temptation.

temptation. And again a little farther; *Whatsoever is brought upon thee take chearfully, and be patient in a low estate: For gold is tried in the furnace, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.* A. D. 252. *Ibid. N. 4. 5.*

6. Thus holy Job, by the loss of his estate, and the death of his children, and the sore affliction of his body, by the lowly disease, was so far from being conquered; that he came off from the trial approved and commended: He exemplified the power of his religion by the strength of his patience, when in the height of all his sufferings and sorrows he breathed out his complaints so submissively in the following words; *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return to the earth; [from whence I was taken] the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; he hath done as he pleased, blessed be the name of the Lord!* And when his wife would have persuaded him, in the rage and agony of his torment, to have spoken injuriously and dishonourably of God and of his dealings; he replied, we find, to her; *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh; if we have received good at the hand of God, why should we not bear with evil? In all these things which beset him, Job sinned not with his lips before the Lord.* And therefore we have this testimony of him from God upon record; *Hast thou considered my servant Job? For there is not one like him upon earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that feareth God?* *§. 6. That Job was as remarkable for his afflictions as for his piety. Job i. 21. Job 2. 10. Ibid. c. i. §. 8.*

7. Thus good Tobit, notwithstanding all his generosity, and many commendations given him for his various acts of charity, was deprived of his sight; and in the midst of his affliction, by fearing God, and blessing his holy name, he improved his misfortune into a fresh occasion of manifesting his virtue; his wife would fain have corrupted him also, thus taunting him: *Where are thine alms, and thy righteous deeds? Behold what you suffer!* But he was so powerfully fortified by a steadfast fear of God, and so well prepared to bear whatever God should determine for him, that instead of any disadvantageous impressions made upon him by the suggestions of his wife, we find his patience thence improved and heightened, and the angel Raphael commending him and saying; *It is honourable to reveal, and to shew forth the works of God: When thou didst pray, and Sarah thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the holy one: And when thou didst bury the dead, in the integrity of thine heart, and didst not delay to rise up and leave thy dinner, to go and cover the dead, I was sent to prove you: And now God hath sent me again to heal thee and Sarah thy daughter-in-law. I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which go in and out before the glory of the holy one.* *§. 7. Thus Tobit was likewise exercised with afflictions. Tobit 2. 14. Tobit 12. 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15.*

8. Good men in all ages have exemplified their patience by enduring affliction: The apostles of our Lord learned from him not to murmur at any evils which here beset them, but to undergo with constancy and courage whatever of this kind should be laid upon them; as well remembering that it was one great offence of the Jews against God, to murmur at his Providence: Thus we find that God admonished them in the book of Numbers, saying; *Let them murmurings against me cease, and they shall not die.* Wherefore, my beloved brethren, we must bear afflictions with patience and courage, and must not murmur at them, observing what is written; *The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and a contrite heart God doth not despise.* *§. 8. Good men were always patients; Abraham the father of the faithful, was thus tried. Numb. 17. 10. Psal. 51. 17.*

[Lowly disease.] I follow here Bishop Fell, who supposes very justly, that our author so understood Job's distemper: *Vulneribus & verminibus graviter afflictus*; wherein he seems to have had his eye upon Job 7. 5. *My flesh is cloathed with worms, and cloths of dust; my skin is broken and become loathsome.* Here is express mention of the worms and the vulners. See §. 11. [of the advantages of patience.]

[To the earth.] *Ecce* say the LXX. which our author explains by *sub terram*. *My flesh does as it pleased,* are also the words of the LXX. whom our author follows. See §. 6. of the 3d book of testimonies.

[Behold what you suffer!] *Ecce quo patieris*, saith our author. The words of the LXX are *Id est, vultu meo*. The communion of the apostles, which our author indulged some of their own sufferings, have been mentioned from Isaiah and Jeremiah, and which in them were partly exultation, and partly lamentation upon them.

Holy

A. D. 252. Holy Ghost hath also spoken to this purpose by the mouth of *Moses*, saying;
Deut. 8. 2, 3. The Lord thy God shall vex thee, and shall suffer thee to hunger; and it shall be known what is in thine heart, whether thou wilt keep his commandments or no. And again; *The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.*
Gen. 22. 1, 2. Thus *Abraham* pleased God, because he declined not the loss of his son, nor even imbruing his hands in his son's blood, at the command of God. What would you do then, who cannot bear the loss of a son by a natural death? how, I ask, would you behave upon such an occasion, if God should command you, as he did *Abraham*, to slay your son?

§. 9.
 That afflictions of all sorts serve to the proof of virtue.

9. Your fear of God, and your affiance in him, should indeed be strong enough to prepare you for all encounters. Thus the loss of your estate, wracking pains and torments in all the limbs of your body, the melancholly separation of your wife, your children, or your dearest friends from you, should rather be considered as rencounters to exercise, than as stumbling-blocks to make you fall; instead of weakning the faith and hope of a christian, they should rather exemplify the powers of them, when put to the tryal and the struggle; and a firm dependence on future good, should flatten his sense of any present evil. There can be no victory, without a struggle for it; when he comes off conqueror from that struggle, then, and not otherwise, may he expect his crown. A storm approves the skill of a pilot, and a soldier's valour must be tryed in battel. To dance upon the rising wave, where there is no danger, is rather matter of entertainment, than any tryal of skill; so that nothing but real adversity will pass for a proper proof of virtue. The tree which hath its root well and deeply fixed in the earth, will not give way to the utmost fury of the winds; a tight vessel will bear the assaults of the waves without leaking; and when corn is threshed, you may observe the true grain untouched by any blasts of wind, whilst the chaff is dispersed and carried off by it. Thus the apostle *St. Paul* hath told us, that, after having suffered shipwreck, been beaten with rods, and endured many sore calamities, he was rather amended than depressed by all of them; and the more he was afflicted, the surer was the proof which he gave of his virtues; *There was given (saith he) to me, a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord, thrice that it might depart from me; and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* Whenever therefore any epidemical distemper rages, or any weakness or sickness oppresses us, this we are to consider as the season and occasion of making our virtue perfect, and of crowning our faith, if it be found strong enough to abide the test. For thus we find it written; *The furnace proveth the potter's vessel; so doth the tryal of affliction prove the righteous.* Finally this is the great difference between us and others who know not God; that they are full of complaints and murmurs in their affliction; whereas no degrees of it can ever alloil our sterling faith and virtue; but instead of impairing will approve and strengthen them. Even the distemper which at present lies so hard upon us, and is so truly terrible in its dreadful symptoms; such as sinking of our strength in colliquative evacuations, grievous inflammations of the *larynx* and parts adjacent, which prey upon the very substance of the parts affected by them; convulsions of the stomach by unintermitted vomitings; a fiery redness of eyes, by an ebullition of the blood upon them; mor-

[Tryal of affliction.] See this reading noted in §. 6. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

[Such as sinking, &c.] The symptoms here recounted speak this distemper to have been of a peculiar kind; and perhaps it varied its shape and form in passing thro' different countries; heightning each illness, which was epidemick to the place it raged in. But 'tis plain from this description, that it was not properly and strictly the plague, as we understand the word in these countries; tho' in a larger sense, we may so be allowed to call it, viz. as an epidemical distemper, very frequently mortal, attended with a great and spreading malignity, and with many febrile symptoms.

tifications

tifications, and thence amputations, of the limbs, thro' the malignity of the humour there discharging it self; a weakness contracted in the whole frame of our bodies disabling us from motion; a dulness of hearing, or a dimness of sight befalling us, from the sad remains of this deplorable malady; even all this, I say, tho' so singularly grievous and formidable to human nature, assists in strengthening and confirming the christian's faith. And indeed what an instance is it of bravery and heroick courage, to encounter undauntedly so many assaults of death and destruction; to stand firm and unmoved amidst the ruins of mankind; and to bear up with vigour and spirit, when others, who have no hope in God, sink and despair under the heavy burden? We should congratulate to our selves, and embrace with all cheerfulness the favourable juncture, which presents us with such an happy occasion of signaling our faith and patience; of going to Christ, thro' the narrow way which leads to him; and of being consigned by his sentence, as our judge, to life immortal, in recompence of the virtues thus approved and exemplified.

A. D. 252.

10. Some, it must be confessed, have reason to be afraid of dying; but they are *such*, as are not entituled to the privilege of regeneration by water and the Spirit, and so are obnoxious to the damnation of hell; *such*, as have no claim to the benefits of the cross of Christ, or to his saving passion; *such*, as a present death shall consign to a future; *such*, as a departure out of this world, shall deliver over to the unspeakable torment of everlasting burnings in another; finally *such*, as shall be gainers by a longer continuance upon earth; gainers at least of a reprieve from those unutterable sorrows, which await them at their exit hence. Wherefore as the present mortality carries all the worst effects of the most dreadful plague along with it to Jews and heathens, and in general to all the enemies of our Lord and Saviour; so the faithful servants of God should consider it, as introductory to an advantageous removal for them: So that when we acknowledge death to be dealt out in common to the righteous and the wicked, we would not be understood to mean, that there is really no difference nor distinction between their several fates; inasmuch as the righteous are called off to a place of refreshment; whilst the wicked are hurried to their proper punishment; the former enter the sooner upon a state of security, as the latter anticipate a part of their final doom: We are therefore, my brethren, much out in our reckoning of

S. 10.
That how formidable soever death may be to heathens, it should by no means be so to christians.

[Place of refreshment.] See note on S. 2. of this tract, and on S. 14. of the case of the leper. This concludes strongly, as indeed the whole strain of our author's reasoning upon this subject doth, that he had no notion of any intermediate state, which should be worse than this world to good men, but that they should immediately enter upon a part of their reward. So Justin Martyr hath asserted, that the souls of the righteous wait in a happy place for the day of judgment, and the souls of the wicked in a worse; in dialog. with Trypho. And Irenaeus, b. 5. c. 5. hath reported it as an apostolique tradition, that paradise was the place to which the souls of good men were carried after their deaths. And Tertullian hath mentioned two sorts of inferi, or states beyond the grave before a resurrection. Why (saith he) should you not suppose that the soul of man, as it expects, either a favourable or fatal judgment, should proportionably be tormented, or refreshed, under these several apprehensions in an intermediate state? So that the soul (as he goes on a little farther) knows both how to grieve and how to rejoice, after death, without its body; it can do so in this life upon proper reflections, and much more after this life, when it shall with more certainty expect its fate from the judgment of God; in his book of the soul, ch. 58. 'Tis true indeed, that he in this very book, and Origen in his 6th book against Celsus, seem to have had some imperfect unsettled notions of a purgatory state, wherein, as Tertullian speaks, "The uttermost suffering was to be exalted, and the lighter failures of human life were to receive purgation and correction; yet Origen upon this argument restrains the excursions of his fancy, and represents indulging his philosophy upon it as uncertain and unsafe." And Tertullian, we know, had an head as warm as Origen's, and not altogether so strong. But we are sure, there was yet no practice of the church grafted upon these conjectural unsettled notions; much less had the prayers for the dead, which obtained so early, any eye of regard to them. For all will agree, that the apostles, martyrs, and the blessed Virgin, had no need of the prayers of the living, to ease them of any purgatory pains; and yet these had then a place in the prayers of the church; and none indeed were entituled to those prayers, but they who were already presumed in a state of happiness; and they who were conceived to be in a place of the highest refreshment, with the least allay to it, had always their share in the intercessions of the church: Thereby to keep up the communion of saints, and to testify the part which the living bore in the interests of the dead. 'Tis however as plain as can be, that our author indulged none of those conjectures, which have been mentioned from Origen and Tertullian, and which in them were purely speculative, and had no practice formed upon them.

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A. D. 152. this whole matter; we discern not in it the gracious purposes of providence, nor the advantages designed to us in this dispensation. Whereas we might observe from it, that our virgins go off hence in peace, and carry with them the honours of their condition untainted, to a place where there is no farther danger from the^m terrors of antichrist, nor from their being exposed to the stews and brothels: Our youths avoid hereby the hazards attending their nice and critical stage of life, and escaping the pollution which is in the world through lust, have happily attained to their joy and crown. The tender matron hence is rid of all apprehension from the torments to which her religion might expose her; she no longer feels the cruel hand of the executioner, the prevention of whose attempts against her she hath gained by her earlier departure. By the shock of this calamity, and by the dread of sharing in it, the lukewarm are spirited, the negligent are awakened, the slothful are rowzed; apostates hasten their return to the church they have forsaken; heathens are induced to come into it; they who have all along been bred in it from their youth, have their *quietus* given them; fresh and numerous forces are lifted into the service, who will behave ('tis hoped) with the greater gallantry and courage, and contempt of death, as having entered upon it, in a time when death was most likely to be their portion.

§. 11.
Several advantages counted as attending this dispensation.

11. Nor is it, my brethren, a circumstance of small account in the case before us, that the distemper, which appears to us in other respects with such a frightful visage, serves as a proper test of our obedience, and as a proof and trial of our several dispositions; whether *e. g.* they, who are yet untouched by it, have charity enough in them to attend the occasions of the infected; whether relations bear a true affection to each other; whether masters have any due compassion for the distressed of their dying servants; whether physicians will venture to visit their patient's begging their assistance; whether the furious and raging will abate of their fierceness; whether the extortioner will soften his hand, and remit any part of his greedy exactions; whether the proud and haughty will now at last submit and drop their arrogant pretensions; whether the rich, upon the loss of their nearest relations, and the likelihood thence of their dying without an heir, will, in such a juncture, be prevailed with to open their hands and hearts, and to give any thing in the way of charity: Even though the present mortality should in no other respect contribute to our advantage, it would, however, in this single point be very serviceable to us, that it hath taught us to desire martyrdom, by arming us against the fears of death; so that each funeral solemnity, is indeed to us a trial of our skill, and an exercise of our virtue; it fortifies our minds, and prepares us for the honour of a martyr's crown, by enabling us to despise the King of terrors.

§. 12.
That this distemper should not be dreaded under the pretence of its hindering any one's martyrdom.

12. To all this, perhaps, it may be, by some, objected, that this is the particular which most afflicts them in the present distress: "They had devoted themselves with all the strength and power of their minds to suffer for the name of Christ, and were prepared, at all adventures, to make a solemn confession of his faith; and then, it may be, the distemper unhappily steps

[Terrors of antichrist; and exposed to the stews and brothels.] This alludes to the notions then prevailing of antichrist as soon to come, and to afflict the christians with all manner of vexations, the avoiding which was esteemed a singular felicity. This induced Tertullian to give it as a reason of christian's praying for *more sinis*, because antichrist was to come before the end of the world, and to exert all his cruelty against them. *Apol. c. 39.* But though he gave this as a reason to the *Gentiles* for so praying; 'tis certain that in other respects, and upon other accounts, christians desired the consummation of all things, that God would accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom. With respect indeed to the living, and with a view of the sad calamities which were to precede the consummation of all things, they might desire some delay of it; but with respect to the saints departed, and to the full completion of their own hopes, they might and did wish, that the world might come to its appointed period. And therefore the same Tertullian in his book of the resurrection of the flesh, c. 22. saith, *Thos christians breathed for nothing more ardently than the dissolution of the world.*

As to the stews and brothels here mentioned, it was one part of the terrors denounced against christian virgins by the heathen powers, to expose them there by force, unless they would desert their religion.

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" in between them and their purposes, prevents the effect of them by a sudden stroke, and so deprives them of the honour they had promised themselves of laying down their lives in the cause of Christ and of his gospel." A. D. 252.

Now to this I reply in the first place, that martyrdom is a thing not always in their power, as coming of grace, and being the gift of God; that therefore they cannot say they have *lost* what 'tis possible they would never have so behaved as to have deserved *receiving*. In the next place granting to them, that they would so have behaved; I would desire them to consider, that God, as he is the searcher of the hearts and reins, and the discernor of their most secret and hidden purposes, will observe, approve and reward whatever is truly commendable or praise-worthy in them; so that if he sees them prepared for the encounter, he will assign them the crown of victory. *Cain*, when he made his offering, had not yet killed his brother; yet God, upon a foresight of *them*, condemned the malicious *purposes* of his heart: Wherefore, as in that example, he foresaw an evil design, before it was perfected in act and deed; so when his faithful servants have entered upon good resolutions, such as of confessing his name, and of suffering for it, he is no less ready to applaud, and to crown the pious thought. There is a very great difference between the case of those whose minds are prepared for martyrdom, but want the opportunity; and of those who have the opportunity, but want the mind for it. God will judge us by the dispositions wherein he finds us at his summons; he hath expressly assured us, saying; *All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts*. He desires not so much our *actual* martyrdom, as those degrees of faith and constancy which fit us for it. For *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, were, none of them, actually slain for the sake of God; and yet their faith and righteousness were in such high esteem with him, that their names stand foremost upon record in the list of his worthies; with whom it is said, that every faithful and upright servant, *shall sit down in the kingdom of God*. Rev. 2. 23.

13. Above all things we should bear in our minds the obligation we lie under to do, not our own, but our heavenly Father's will; according to what our blessed Lord hath taught us to desire of him in our daily prayer. Now how inconsistent and absurd is it for us to desire, that his will may be done, when yet upon his summoning us to leave this world, we are backward and reluctant, and are loth to answer to his call? Thus we strive (all we can) against it, and like offending servants, who are shy of appearing before their master; we are haled by force into the presence of our Lord, and come thither by constraint, and not by choice; and how then can we have the face to expect the rewards and honours of his kingdom, which we would fain have avoided as long as we were able? With what propriety or truth do we pretend to beg of him that his kingdom may come (*i. e.* the kingdom of heaven) when we plainly prefer before it a state of slavery and bondage upon earth? Wherefore do we so often repeat our desires to him, to *hasten his kingdom*; when 'tis evident that we would rather continue here in a state of subjection to the devil, than reign with Christ in his kingdom and glory? Matt. 8. 11.

14. Finally, as a farther proof of God's prescience and providence, and of his care and concern for the real advantages of his servants, take the following relation: There was a certain colleague and fellow-bishop of ours who being almost at the last gasp, and extremely shocked at the thoughts of death, earnestly begged some time of respite; when in the midst of his prayer, whilst all appearances foreboded to him a speedy dissolution, there stood by him a §. 13.

§. 13. A certain bishop. When our author's vision, just a year before his martyrdom, is considered, this will not be incredible. See note [*vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasures*] in ep. 7. The question will only be, whether it is, or was ever possible, for any man to distinguish a real revelation from mere enthusiasm. If this be granted possible, why not to our author or to any bishop of approved sanctity in his times, when miracles were still in some degree necessary? But if this was never possible, where is our religion? Observe the contents of the next §.

A. D. 252. youth of a majestic presence, tall in stature, of a venerable aspect, and such as mortal eyes could scarce endure to behold; except as our brother's near neighbourhood to another world might peculiarly qualify him for bearing such a spectacle. The youth with a good deal of seeming displeasure and emotion said to him; *You are afraid of suffering, yet are loth to quit the place of it; and what then shall I do for you, when you know not what to ask?* An answer this, which may serve at once for our correction and instruction! Giving no consent nor encouragement to the vain desires of those, who are so very solicitous upon the point of a persecution here; and so very indolent and indifferent towards the joys of the place they are called to; but instead of it, consulting their future good, their truest and most solid interest! Our colleague therefore received upon his death-bed an admonition which he was to impart to others; for since he was so near his death, he received it only to deliver it; for *our* sakes, and not for his *own*; being just upon the point of departure; what he might learn from it, as to his *own* particular case, could be of no great use nor service to him; but to *us*, who stayed behind, it was a just and proper admonition; that finding a bishop of Christ's church, rebuked for his desire of a reprieve from death, we might thence be instructed what would be most convenient for our selves in the like exigence.

§. 15.

That Cyprian himself was often warned by God to arm his brethren against the fears of death.

15. I say self, however unworthy of so great an honour, have been frequently warned by express revelation from God, to declare in the most publick and pressing manner, that we ought not to mourn for the death of those, whom our Lord hath called to himself, and delivered from the troubles of this world; inasmuch as we know and should consider, that they are not so properly sent away from us, as before us; that they have only got the start of us, as it were in a voyage or a journey; that tho' we may be allowed to miss them, it will not be fit we should lament them, as if they were lost; nor attire our selves in black for them, when they are now clothed in white raiment; lest we give hereby an handle to the Gentiles of upbraiding our despair and sorrow, in accounting those as lost and dead to us, whom we profess to believe alive unto God; and of producing the testimony of our hearts against that of our lips; whilst our behaviour upon these occasions speaks us not in earnest, though in words we avow our belief, that our departed brethren are in a state of happiness.

Revel. 3. 5.

§. 16. That to be afraid of death is to betray our faith and hope.

§. 16.

That to be afraid of death is to betray our faith and hope.

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shall not dye for ever. are the words of the original, which our author hath very properly rendered, non morietur in aeternum, shall not dye for ever; and this is more pertinent to the sense, as well as more agreeable to the words, than our English translation, shall never dye.

go to Christ, when he calls us with all imaginable chearfulness, with whom we are to live and to reign for ever. We should really therefore consider death no otherwise than as a necessary passage to life immortal; inasmuch as we cannot arrive at our *eternal* mansions without leaving these *temporal* ones; and should therefore, I say, look upon our departure hence, as a short and transient journey to our everlasting abode and settlement. Who then would not hasten to a change so much for the better? Who would not desire, with the greatest fervency of spirit, to begin it with the soonest, to be fashioned again in the likeness of Christ, and so to enter upon the participation of his heavenly glory? The apostle hath proclaimed to us; *Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* Philip. 3. 20. This our Lord himself hath encouraged us to expect and hope for, where he prayed his Father, that we might be with him, and share with him the glories of his heavenly kingdom; *Father (said he) I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me before the foundation of the world.* John 17. 24.

17. The man who expects admission to the mansions of Christ, and to heavenly glory, will be quite out of character if he be found in mourning and lamentation; his faith and his firm dependence upon the performance of his Master's promises, should rather make his removal hence the subject of joy and triumph to him. Thus we find that *Enoch* pleased God, and was therefore translated into heaven; as the holy scripture witnesseth concerning him, saying, *That Enoch pleased God, and was not found, because God translated him.* Gen. 5. 24. This (we see) was the happy effect of his pleasing God, that he was judged fit for a removal from the pollutions of this world. ^{9. 17.} The Holy Ghost hath also taught us by the mouth of *Solomon*, that they who please God, are the sooner taken hence, and delivered from the various troubles of the present scene; lest their longer continuance upon it, should taint their virtue. *Speedily (saith he) was he taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding; for his soul pleased the Lord; therefore hastened he to take him away from the midst of wickedness.* Wisdom 4. 11. Thus likewise we read in the book of *psalms* of the religious soul hastning to God upon the wings of faith and holy devotion; *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts: My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord.* Psal. 84. 1, 2. He, and only he, should desire a long continuance in this world, who hath placed his satisfaction in it, whom it allures and deceives with its treacherous enticements and its delusive charms.

18. It should farther be considered, that the world hates a christian, as such; and wherefore then should a christian be fond of that which hates him; and not rather follow Christ, who hath given him so great a proof of his love, by undertaking to redeem him? St. *John* hath pronounced upon this subject with great vehemence, and warned us against being seduced by the lusts of the flesh into an irregular Love of the world. *Love not (saith he) the world, neither the things which are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: For all which is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and none of this is of the Father, but from the lust of the world: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever, even as God abideth for ever.* John 2. 15, 16, 17. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, it will be

^p Pleased God, &c.] Our author exactly follows the LXX, whose reading this is; and which explains our version, (walked with God) i. e. agreeably to his will, and so pleased him.

^q The Holy Ghost by the mouth of Solomon.] Observe here how our author, without scruple, imputes this book to inspiration; of which however there might be several degrees; and it doth not always follow, that a book is (in every word and part of it) infallible, because it was written by inspiration from the Holy Ghost; so that there is still room for allowing some difference between the *apocryphal* and *canonical* books of scripture, notwithstanding any high appellations given to the former.

A.D. 252. come us to resign our selves entirely to the will of God, with courage and constancy, and to prepare our selves for any portion which he shall be pleased to allot us: we should lay aside all cowardly apprehensions of death, and think of nothing but that life and immortality to which it leads us: We should shew the power of our faith, by bearing the departure of our dearest friends, without emotion or concern; and when it shall please God to call us, in our own persons, to himself, we should gladly receive his summons, and follow him with cheerfulness and without delay.

§. 19.
Especially
since now at
the end of the
world many
flocking cala-
mities hover
over it.

19. This is a conduct at all times fit for the servants of God; but at no time more fit than now; when the world is hastening to its period, and is already surrounded with various evils, which are the harbingers of its approaching catastrophe: we therefore who observe them begun, and know that worse are coming, should esteem it our privilege and advantage to be removed out of the way of them: Should the walls of your house be bulging, through length of time, and threaten its sudden fall; would you not make all the haste you could to get out of it? Should a storm arise when you are out at sea, and forebode a wreck to you; would you not crowd your sails, and make with all speed to harbour? The world, my brethren, gives you as plain prognosticks of its end approaching, though not so much from the length of its continuance, as from having reached its appointed period; and will you not then give thanks to God and congratulate your own felicity, when you are permitted to make your retreat betimes, and to escape thereby the shocks and terrors of its dissolution?

§. 20.
That we
should always
bear in mind
our baptismal
vow, and
that state of
things which
we profess to
aspire after.

20. We should ever carry it in our thoughts, and improve it into a standing principle, that we have solemnly renounced the world, and therefore whilst we continue in it, should behave like strangers and pilgrims. We should therefore thankfully welcome that happy day which is to fix us, each, in our proper habitation, to rescue us from the various embarrassments of this world, to disengage us from its several perplexities and snares, and to restore us to a state of paradise, and to the kingdom of heaven. Who amongst us, if he had been long a sojourner in a foreign land, would not desire a return to his native country? Who, when he had begun to sail thither, would not wish for a prosperous wind to carry him home with expedition, that he might the sooner embrace his friends and relations? We now should account paradise our proper country, as we have already begun to reckon the patriarchs our fathers; and therefore should be fond of hastening to the sight of our proper country, to the embraces of our parents and dearest friends. There friends, and parents, and brethren, and children, without number wait for us, and long to congratulate our happy arrival; they are in secure possession of their own felicity, and want only the accession of ours to finish and complete it. How great must

[The world is hastening to its period.] See note on §. 6. of the vanity of idols, and §. 14. of the unity of the church, note [end of the world.] To which I may add, in excuse of those fathers who mistook the world to be near its period, that even the apostles themselves seem to have been under this apprehension; and St. John particularly in 1 epist. 2. 18. seems to have thought it very near, since he saith there that it is the last hour, &c. And the fathers surely might well be ignorant of what our Saviour before had pronounced, that no man, not even the Son himself knew, as to the precise time of the general judgment. Matt. 24. 36.

[Solemnly renounced the world.] This refers to baptismal renunciations, of which see more in note on §. 5. [of the habit of virgins.]

[To fix us, each, in our proper habitation.] Hence, as indeed from the whole tenour of this tract besides, it plainly appears that our author thought the souls of the righteous were then assigned immediately to a state of rest and refreshment. See note §. 10. [place of refreshment.]

[Patriarchs our fathers.] Viz. by a continuation of the church of God from them to the Jews, and from the Jews to christians.

[Want only the accession of ours.] As one reason why the saints upon earth should desire the consummation of all things, is, that the saints in heaven wait till then to be perfected; so the saints in heaven may, not improbably, perform their offices of communion with those upon earth, by desiring their release from the troubles of this life, and their exemption from those farther dangers to which a state of trial will ever be obnoxious. The cry of the souls under the altar. (Revel. 6. 9, 10.) represents them as in a state

we then conceive will be our common joy, upon the transport of our meeting together in those blessed abodes? How unutterable must be the pleasures of the kingdom of heaven, which have no alloy from any danger of their discontinuance, but are sure and immutable for evermore, as having eternity added to the highest degrees of bliss? *There* we shall meet with the glorious choir of the apostles; with the goodly company of the prophets; with an innumerable multitude of holy martyrs, honoured with their crowns of victory, and rejoicing in the successful issue of their several encounters: *There* we shall be blessed with the sight of those triumphant virgins, who by dint of reason and resolution have subdued the inordinate lusts of the flesh; and *there* also we shall behold the reward of the charitable and compassionate, who agreeably to the commands of Christ, have wrought their several works of righteousness, in feeding the hungry, and succouring the destitute and afflicted; and so with their *earthly* treasure have purchased to themselves a treasure in *heaven*. To this delightful society, and to Christ who is at the head of it, let us hasten, my brethren, upon the wings of desire, and of an holy love. Let God and Christ observe, that this is the main bent of our wishes, and the sum of our most ardent hopes; and then there is no doubt but they will proportion their rewards, to the measure of our respective dispositions towards them.

state which wanted somewhat to complete and perfect it. And our supposing that they expect our arrival to join them with some degree of impatience, is indeed no more a diminution of their bliss, than that representation doth in strictness amount to. See notes on §. 10. [place of refreshment, and terrors of Antichrist.]



To FORTUNATUS upon the subject of an EXHORTATION to MARTYRDOM.

Who this Fortunatus was, it is not very material to enquire; since the name was a common one, and there is no circumstance in the body of the work, whereby to fix more particularly upon him. Possibly enough he might be that Fortunatus, to whom, among others, the lvith epistle of our author is directed; the same person might likewise, not improbably, be a subscriber to the council of Carthage, under the name of Fortunatus a Thucabori. The occasion of this tract, was the renewal of the persecution under Gallus and Volusianus, who with great rigour exacted a compliance from all with the publick sacrifices, which they had appointed to be offered, for appeasing the anger of their deities, manifested, as they thought, in that contagious distemper, which was the subject of the foregoing tract. Our author was aware of the consequence, and had frequent admonitions by impulse from above, whither all this would tend; as he tells the people of Thibaris in epist. lviii. Wherefore whilst the persecution was hot, he wrote the following tract, to confirm the minds of his flock, and to fortify them in the day of trial. Our right reverend annalist hath therefore assigned this work to the month of June, A. D. 252. The reader will observe it written much in the way wherein the books of Testimonies (especially the third) were written.

A. D. 252.

The PREFACE.

IN regard to the heavy persecution and distress which at present afflict us, and to the dismal times of antichrist, which are now towards the end of the world approaching us; you have made it your request to me, my dear *Fortunatus*, that I would spirit up the soldiers of Christ, and prepare their minds for this ghostly conflict by encouragements deduced from the holy scriptures. I have judged your request very reasonable, and have accordingly complied with it; and tho' my abilities are much under-proportioned to a work of this consequence; yet I have endeavoured, with God's assistance, to draw together what stores I could out of that great magazine, and therewith to furnish out our brethren for this difficult encounter. For in so great a crisis as this, I could not content my self with my ordinary exhortations to the people of God from the pulpit, without a farther endeavour to confirm their faith, and to strengthen their courage by some *additional* supports from texts of holy scripture. Nor doth any thing enter more properly within my care and character, than providing the people, committed to my charge by the providence of God, with defensive armour, to secure them against the several darts and incursions of the devil. A soldier will never well approve himself in the day of battel, who hath not been exercised beforehand in the field. Nor will he who runs for the prize obtain it, if he hath not tryed his strength, and inured himself to fatigue and labour by some previous exercises. The adversary we have here to deal with is an old one, and hath had great experience. The devil began his assaults upon man^b near six thousand years ago. So that he must needs in all this time have made himself acquainted with every art and stratagem, and all the forms of attacking us, which are in any manner likely to succeed against us: If he finds the soldier of Christ off his guard, raw, and unexperienced, or any way unprepared to receive him; he easily surprizes and makes a prey of him. But if any man will resolutely stand his ground, and abide by the precepts of his Lord and Captain, and follow his example, 'tis impossible that such a man should fail of victory; since Christ, by whose name he is called, and under whom he serves, is invincible. Now, ^c my dear brother, you will observe my contrivance of the following tract, and how I have reduced it to a narrow compass, that it might not, by swelling into too great a bulk, tire the reader's or the hearer's patience. I have therefore ranged the whole under so many distinct heads, and titles, which should be fixed by all means upon the reader's memory; and have subjoined, as a support to each of them, proper texts of holy scripture; so that in this work I have rather furnished you with materials for a treatise, than composed a just one. And this I judge the more useful way, and of more general service. The other, I take to be like presenting you with a suit of my own cloaths ready made, which perhaps might not fit you, as being made for another person. I have therefore chosen rather to send you^d the wooll and the dye from the lamb, who redeemed and quickened us, and leave it to your self to make them up into a garment; that you and others, into whose hands they shall fall, may fit them to your selves,

^a Towards the end of the world.] See note on §. 19. of the preceding tract, [the world hastening to its period.]

^b Near six thousand years ago.] The chronology of the antients was by no means exact. They took the year of our Lord's birth to be co-incident with the year of the world 5500. So that in 252 years after, our author might well enough say, that 6000 years were near expired, from the beginning of the world; viz. A. M. 5752.

^c My dear brother.] This compellation gives countenance to the conjecture, that *Fortunatus* was a bishop.

^d The wooll and the dye.] *Lanam & purpuram*: The purple here alludes to blood, the martyrs blood, which is the subject of the treatise. The allusion of the lamb to Christ, and to his word in holy scripture, is obvious, and the intelligent reader will easily discern it.

and use them as your proper cloaths. And thus I hope no one will want a decent covering, but all will put on Christ, be clothed with his garments, and sanctified with his heavenly grace. I considered moreover, my dear brother, that in an exhortation designed to persuade to *martyrdom*, all unnecessary circumlocutions were to be avoided, and as little as possible of human discourse or eloquence was to mix with it; since the words of God, and the persuasions wherewith Christ invites his servants to *martyrdom*, are infinitely the fittest for such an occasion. The best weapons which can be put into the hands of a soldier of Christ, when he is going forth to battle, are the precepts of the gospel; *they* are in all these cases the fittest instruments to sound the charge. With *these* I would have the christian soldiery roused and awakened, and prepared for the sharpest encounters. My part should only be, preparing those for a ^e *second* baptism, upon whom, by divine permission, ^f I conferred their *first*; by inculcating and suggesting to them, that the *second* hath a larger measure of grace entailed upon it; speaks a more exalted degree of virtue, and is entitled to the larger portion of honour; as being a baptism, in which ^g the angelical powers are assisting; a baptism, in the triumphs of which, God and Christ are partakers; a baptism, ^h after which no man can commit a sin; a baptism, which ⁱ perfects all the former advances we have made in our holy faith; and finally a baptism, which ^k joins us to God immediately after our departure hence. There is this difference between the baptism by water, and that by blood; that the one entitles us to the immediate remission of all our sins, the other to the immediate reward of all our virtues. So that upon the whole, there is nothing which we ought more earnestly to desire, nor more ardently to embrace, than ^l the opportunity of commencing the *friends* of God from being his *servants*.

A. D. 152.

^e *Second baptism.*] *Viz.* by blood; as our Saviour himself had alluded to martyrdom under the notion of a baptism, *Matt.* 20. 22. Bishop Fell.

^f *I conferred their first.*] Baptism was antiently reserved to the bishop; according to that of St. Ignatius in his epistle to the people of Smyrna; *without the bishop it is not lawful to baptize, nor to celebrate the holy eucharist.* Accordingly there was no baptistery in any place of worship within his district, but only in the church where he personally officiated. Bishop Fell.

^g *The angelical powers are assisting.*] *Viz.* By their conveyance of the soul departed to its mansions of rest; or perhaps by their being, as it were the sponsors, in this kind of baptism. Bishop Fell.

^h *After which no man can commit a sin.*] All former sins were supposed forgiven by the common baptism of water. So that whosoever dyed without committing a sin after it, was secure of salvation. And therefore the baptism by blood was the more valuable from their circumstance, that no sin could be committed after it.

ⁱ *Perfects all former advances.*] Of this *τελειωσις* or perfection, see *Luke* 13. 32. and *Heb.* 2. 10. Bishop Fell.

^k *Joins us to God immediately.*] So Tertullian had said in his book of patience, ch. 13. that martyrdom leads directly to the throne of God. And again in his apology, that the favour and the pardon of God are thereby obtained, without other form, or apparatus, as its immediate consequents. The notion was, that other good men were to wait till the day of judgment for the consummation of their bliss; but that martyrs were admitted without delay to, at least, much higher degrees of it than any others were, and to an absolute assurance of salvation. See §. 20. of the preceding tract. And epist. to Ananias, where our author saith, that martyrs are forthwith admitted to the recompence of their faith and virtue. (Bishop Fell.) See note on §. the last of the ensuing treatise.

^l *The opportunity of commencing.*] This is insisted on as the privilege of martyrs, to be more closely than others admitted into the favour and friendship of God, and to follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth, *Revelat.* 14. 4. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 1552.

A sketch of the following TREATISE, the order 'tis handled in, and the several heads whereupon it proceeds.

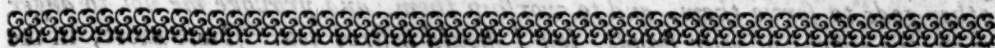
1.  IN the exhortations used to our brethren, to prepare them for a solemn confession of the christian religion, to strengthen their faith, and to fortify them against the terrors of persecution and death; the first thing to be insisted on is, the proof that idols made by the art of man are ^m no true gods; for that whatever is *made* can never be greater or more powerful than the person *making* it; and that 'tis impossible they should be able to protect or profit any person, who, themselves, fall to ruin in their own temples, unless preserved and repaired by the endeavours of man. As likewise, that the elements ought not to be worshipped as Gods; since according to the order established by divine providence, they minister to the necessities and conveniences of human life.
2. When this is done, when idols are demolished, and the true notion of the elements is settled; the next point will be to shew, that the Lord is the only fit object of divine worship.
3. In the 3^d place should be added the menaces of God against such as sacrifice to idols.
4. It should moreover be observed, that idolaters are very hardly pardoned.
5. As likewise that idolatry is so far the object of God's displeasure, that he hath commanded those to be put to death, who shall entice any person to that heinous sin.
6. To this should be subjoined an observation, that as we are redeemed and quickened by the blood of Christ, we ought to prefer nothing before *him*, since he preferred nothing before *us*; nay for our sakes he chose evil before good, poverty before riches, servitude before rule and power, and death before a never-dying life. That in return to this, and for our own sakes as well as his, we, when called upon to suffer for his name, should prefer the riches and pleasures of paradise, before the poor and ignoble state of things in this world; an eternal crown and kingdom before the transient and temporary bondage of the life which now is; eternal life before eternal death; God and Christ before the devil and antichrist.
7. A caution should moreover be laid in, for those who have been snatched away from the power of the devil, and rescued from the several snares and embarrasments of this world, that they should not be moved by any difficulties or pressures, which may lie heavy upon them, to relapse into their former courses, lest they forfeit their privilege, and lose all the advantages which they have hitherto obtained.
8. That they should rather persist more earnestly, and persevere in their faith and constancy, that what is begun in them may be perfected, and they may receive at length the crown, and the palm of victory.
9. Inasmuch as persecutions and distresses are suffered to befall us for this very purpose, of proving and of trying us.
10. That injurious and cruel treatment should not affright us, because our Lord hath more power to protect, than the devil hath to hurt, us.
11. And that no person may be grievously surprized or disconcerted with the distresses or sufferings which fall to the lot of christians in this life, it should be proved that these things have been foretold to them, that the world should hate and persecute them; and so the event corresponding with the prediction,

^m No true Gods.] The reader will easily observe the particular importance of these several topics, which our author goes upon, as peculiarly fitted to the times for which they were calculated.

will naturally make way for a belief of what yet remains to be accomplished, as to the performance of God's promises, and as to the rewards intended for them: And that it is indeed no novelty, no peculiar hardship upon christians to be thus treated, since from the very beginning of the world it hath ever been the lot of good men to be ill used, and that the righteous have been all along oppressed, and in many instances put to death by the wicked.

A. D. 252.

12. Lastly it should be observed, how great the hope, and the recompence of good men is who suffer in the cause of God, when their distresses and persecutions are over passed; and that the reward of their sufferings will be far over-proportioned to any degree or measure of them.



IN the cxvth psalm it is expressly said, That the idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. That they have mouths and speak not, have eyes and see not, ears, and yet hear not, neither is there any breath in their mouths. They who make them are like unto them. Thus likewise we read in the Wisdom of Solomon;

§. 1.
That idols are no gods, and that the elements ought not to have divine worship paid to them.

Psal. 115. 4, 5, 6, 8.

Psal. 135. 17.

Wisd. 15. 15, 16, 17.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Exod. 20. 4.

Wisd. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

They counted all the idols of the heathen to be gods, which neither have the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear, nor fingers upon their hands to handle, and as for their feet they are slow to go; for man made them, and he that borrowed his own spirit fashioned them. But no man can make a god like unto himself; for being mortal he worketh a dead thing with wicked hands; for he himself is better than the things which he worshippeth, since he lived once, but they never. Thus also it is written in the book of Exodus; Thou shalt not make unto thee an idol, nor the likeness of any thing. Thus also we find Solomon expressing himself of the elements, and of such as worshipped them; That by considering the works they did not acknowledge the work-masters; but deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the sun, or the moon to be the gods which govern the world. With whose beauty, if they being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much more beautiful the Lord of them is; or if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand how much mightier he is who made these mighty things.

It is written in the book of Deuteronomy; Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And in Exodus; Thou shalt have none other gods besides me. And again in Deuteronomy; See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I will kill, and I will make alive, I will wound and I will heal; neither is there any who can deliver out of my hand. And in the Revelations thus; I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all which is therein. Thus our Lord hath expressed himself in the gospel, upon occasion of mentioning the first and second commandment; Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: On these two commandments

§. 2.

That God alone is to be worshipped.

Deut. 6. 13.

Exod. 20. 3.

Deut. 32. 39.

Revel. 14. 6, 7.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

Mark 12. 29.

So the LXX reader is, *idol*, an idol, not *idol*, a graven image; it not being material whether that which is worshipped be painted, or graven, a picture, or an image. Bp. Fell reads it, *the fountain of waters*; and the MSS. favour this reading. Bp. Fell.

A. D. 252. *hang all the law and the prophets.* And again; *This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

§ 3. *The threats denounced by God against such as sacrifice to idols.* 3. Thus in the book of Exodus; *He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.* And in Deuteronomy; *They sacrificed unto devils, not to God.* And in Isaiah; *They have worshipped the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.* And the mean man hath bowed down, and the great man hath humbled himself; and I will not forgive them. And again; *Even to them have ye poured a drink-offering, and offered a meat-offering; and shall I not be angry at these things, saith the Lord?* And again in Jeremiah; *Go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, lest I should destroy you.* Once more, in the book of Revelations; *If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in the forehead or in the hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever: And they shall have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image.*

§ 4. *That God doth not easily pardon idolaters.* 4. In the book of Exodus we find Moses in vain interceding for his people, and saying; *I pray thee, O Lord, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin, forgive it; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written.* And the Lord said unto Moses, *Whoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.* Thus when the prophet Jeremiah would have made intercession for his people, the Lord forbade him, saying; *Pray not thou for this people, neither make intercession for them; for I will not hear,* when they pray unto me in the day of their trouble. The prophet Ezekiel hath also threatened those with the wrath of God, who presume to offend against him, in terms of the same importance; *The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, When the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out my hand upon it, and I will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it. Tho' these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they shall deliver neither sons, nor daughters, they only shall be (themselves) delivered.* Thus in the first book of Samuel; *If one man sin against another, they shall intercede with God for him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?*

§ 5. *That God is so far displeased with idolatry, that he hath commanded those to be put to death, who shall entice another to it.* 5. Thus in Deuteronomy; *if thy brother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, shall entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, namely the gods of the nations which are round about you; thou shalt not consent unto him,*

[Which is mixed.] The word *angere* seems to have been overlooked, or else designedly omitted by our author, and perhaps was not in his copy. And indeed the sense is entire without it: For *tu autem* hath a better sound with it, than *tu autem angere* or *angere*. See this passage cited and noted in §. 12. of the case of the lapses.

[When they pray unto me in the day of their trouble.] The LXX read it thus, *Με ωρεϊσθης παρ' εμου εν τη ημερα της θηρας αυτων.* Whether our author quoted this passage by memory, or no, I cannot determine; tho' his words, which I have literally translated, answer not exactly to any reading which is now extant. But then we must observe, that this is no passage of consequence, and his reading is as material to any point it can be cited for, as the other; nor is the difference great between our author, and the Syriac and Arabic versions; nor the Chaldean paraphrast; nor indeed the Hebrew it self. [To offend against him.] Offences of the higher sort, those for which penance was in the primitive church exacted, were ranged under three distinct classes; and those which were committed more immediately against God, by apostacy, idolatry, &c. were accounted most heinous. Our author in his 17th epistle hath mentioned, *minora delicta, quæ non in Dominum committuntur.* And this is the order observed by Gregory Nyssen in his canonical epistle, where he hath ranged the sins, which merited solemne penance, under their respective classes, and according to their esteemed demerits. The citation which follows here from 1 Sam. 2. 25. doth farther illustrate and confirm this distinction.

[They shall intercede.] So the LXX; we read, *the judge shall judge him.*

nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, ^{A. D. 252.} neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt discover him, and his crime; [†] thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people. And they shall stone him with stones that he dye, because he hath sought to turn thee away from the Lord thy God. Thus again God hath directed that a whole city should not be spared, if it should agree in revolting to the worship of idols. [†] If thou shalt hear any saying in one of thy cities which the Lord thy God shall give thee to dwell there, [†] Let us go [†] and serve other gods which thou hast not known; then thou shalt enquire [†] diligently; and behold if the thing be true which is reported, thou shalt surely smite all the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, and shalt burn the city with fire, and it shall be an heap for ever, it shall not be built again; that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger; and shew thee mercy, and have compassion on thee, and multiply thee, when thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments. The extraordinary strictness of this precept was the circumstance which provoked *Mattathias* to kill the Jew who came to sacrifice on the altar, [erected at *Modin* by the King's commandment.] Now if these several directions, with regard to the worship of God, and to the abhorrence of all idolatry, were observed with such exactness and punctuality, before the coming of Christ; [†] of how much more observance are they worthy after it? since upon his coming into the world he hath taught us as well by example as by precept, by enduring all manner of outrages and indignities, and at last by submitting to the death of the cross, to dye and to suffer as he hath done before us; for surely man can have no excuse from suffering in his own for his own person, when Christ hath suffered for us; I say when Christ hath suffered for the sins of other men, those other men certainly can plead no exemption from suffering for themselves. Our Lord hath therefore very well admonished us in the following caution, where he thus declares himself; *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* ^{Matt. 10. 33; 34.} Thus we are likewise told by the apostle *St. Paul*; *That if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us.* ^{2 Tim. 2. 11; 12.} *St. John* hath also assured us; *That whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father;* [[†] but he that acknowledgeth the Son, the same hath the Son and the Father also.] And our Lord hath,

[†] *Thine hand shall be first.* i. e. As a consequence of being the witness, who made the discovery; for the witness in these cases threw the first stone; to which our Lord alludes *John 8. 7.* *He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her;* i. e. be her accuser. And thus we find the witnesses proceeding in the case of *St. Stephen*, *Acts 7. 58.*

[†] *Ibid. from y. 12. to the end.* This passage is compendiously quoted; the whole sense is included, but not every word.

[†] *Of how much more observance are they worthy after it?* Tho' idolatry was a capital offence under the Jewish economy, *Pamellius* argued very weakly (as bishop *Fell* hath observed) when he thence endeavoured to infer, that heresy might be justly liable to the same punishment under the christian dispensation. Our author here was only deducing the obligation which christians lay under to endure any thing rather than to be guilty of idolatrous compliances; and that this obligation was much stronger since the coming of Christ, than it was before it, (he having taught them how to suffer both by example and by precept.) But his inference reached not to the case of those extraordinary punishments, which were allowable under the Jewish economy; for then it would justify the zeal of private men, in vindicating the honour of God by unauthorized attempts upon the person of the transgressor. And indeed if idolatry were thus penal, the church of *Rome* is the last in the world, which can safely insist upon a rigorous execution. Wherefore her advocates are prudently enough desirous to transfer the punishment to the case of heresy; which will reach, as they think, their adversaries, tho' their adversaries are ready to retort this charge upon them, and to prove it too.

[†] *But he that acknowledgeth the Son, the same hath the Son and the Father also.* So our author reads it; but as several *Greek MSS.* have it not, it hath been supposed by some to have been added to the text by an officious librarian; whereas our author's acknowledgment of it, joined with other great authorities recited by *Dr. Mills*, is a very good reason to believe it genuine, and that the conjecture of *Estius* may be therefore true, which supposes, that the sameness of termination, *ἵνα ὁ υἱος* might mislead some scribes in copying, and induce them to skip over the passage omitted in their respective copies.

A. D. 252. himself, encouraged us to a contempt of death, thus saying; *Fear not them who kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* And again; *He that loveth his life shall lose it; but he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.*

§. 6. Thus our Lord hath declared in the gospel; *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* And in the book of Deuteronomy we find it thus written; *They who say to their father and to their mother, I know you not, and do not acknowledge their own children, these, are they who have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.* And the apostle St. Paul hath added this moving question; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? (As it is written; For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.)*

2 Cor. 5. 15. *Nay in all these things we are conquerors, for his sake who loved us.* Again he tells the Corinthians; *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God, and bear him in your bodies.* Once more; *He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.*

§. 7. In the book of Exodus we read how the children of Israel (who were very pertinent and proper types of us christians) when through the singular favour and protection of God, they had escaped the hardships of a rigorous bondage to the Gentile world, and to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, who was also a type of the devil, (how, I say, after all these distinguished mercies they proved base and ungrateful to God, seditious murmurers against his servant Moses, and had more respect to the difficulties and inconveniences which they felt in the desert, than to the precious advantages of liberty and safety; and accordingly were desirous of a return to Egypt (i. e. indeed to a state of slavery and subjection to the world) from whence they had been just delivered; whereas they ought rather to have reposed their hope and trust in God, and to have believed that he who had delivered his people from the world and the devil, would continue to protect, after having so delivered, them. Wherefore (say they to Moses) *hast thou thus dealt with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? It had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in this wilderness: And Moses said unto the people, fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.* This was the case which our Lord had in view, when he cautioned us in his gospel against returning to the world and the devil after we had solemnly renounced them, and escaped the pollution in them. *No man (saith he) having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.* And again; *Let not him who is in the field, return back; remember Lot's wife.* Once more out of the same evangelist; *Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 9. 62.

Luke 17. 31.

Luke 14. 33.

§. 8.

That we must

persevere in

our faith and

constancy, and

in gospel grace,

in order to ob-

tain a crown

of victory.

2 Chron. 15. 2.

Ezek. 33. 12.

Matt. 10. 21.

John 8. 31, 32.

§. 8. Thus we read in the book of Proverbs; *The Lord is with you whilst ye be with him; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.* And again in the prophetic of Ezekiel; *The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression.* Thus also our Lord hath declared in his gospel; *He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.* And again; *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye shall*

For his sake. Proper enim qui dilexit. *Alē ē ἀγαπᾷ* is the reading of our vulgar copies, *thra* him; but several read it, *Alē ē ἀγαπᾷ* which falls in with our author's *proper enim*.

And bear him. See note on §. 11. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

Looking back. The similitude here is taken from the known case of plowmen, who, if they look back, or behind them, cannot make straight furrows.

know

know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. And again, where he A. D. 252.
is exhorting and advising to be upon our guard, and always in readiness,
he adds; *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye* Luke 12. 35;
your selves like unto men who wait for the Lord, when he will return from 36, 37.
the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him
immediately. Blessed are those servants whom their Lord, when he cometh,
shall find watching. The apostle hath likewise exhorted us to a progress in
our faith, and to go on unto perfection in it; *Know ye not (saith he) that* 1 Cor. 9. 24;
they who run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that 25.
ye may obtain: For every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in
all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an in-
corruptible. And again; *No man who is listed into the service of God, en-* 2 Tim. 2. 4, 5.
tangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him^d who
hath chosen him to be a soldier: And if a man also strive for the mastery, he
is not crowned except he strive lawfully. And again; *I beseech you there-* Rom. 12. 1, 2.
fore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living
sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God: And be not conformed to this world,
but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what
is that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God. Yet farther; *We are* Rom. 8. 16, 17;
the children of God; and if children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs
with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified to-
gether. Once more out of the book of Revelations; *Hold fast that which* Revel. 3. 11.
thou hast, that no man take thy crown. To which example of patience and
perseverance here recommended, that passage in the book of Exodus may
well be supposed alluding, in which, for the conquest of Amalek, who was
a type of the devil, Moses is represented as holding up his hands in the figure
of a cross, which had doubtless a mystical meaning. Nor could he conquer
(we are told) his adversary, otherwise than by abiding in his posture, and keep-
ing both his hands erect in that significant figure. *It came to pass (we read)* Exod. 17. 11;
when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down 12, 13, 14.
his hand, Amalek prevailed; wherefore they took a stone, and put it under
him, and he sat thereon. And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one
on the one side, and the other on the other side, and his hands were steady
until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his
people; and the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book,
and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will put out the remembrance of
Amalek from under heaven.

9. Thus we read in the book of Deuteronomy; *The Lord your God pro-* §. 6.
oveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, That distresses
and with all your soul. And again in a book of Solomon's; *The furnace* and persecuti-
proveth the potter's vessel, so doth the trial of affliction^e prove the righte- ons befall us
ous. St. Paul hath likewise laid down the same doctrine, saying; *We rejoice* for a proof
in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations and trial of
also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience produceth us.
proof of us, and the proof of us hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, be- Dent. 13. 3.
cause the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which Eccles. 27. 5.
is given unto us. So likewise St. Peter in his epistle; *Beloved, think it not* Rom. 5. 3, 4, 5.
*strange concerning the^f fire befalling you, which is to try you; * neither be* 1 Pet. 4. 12,
discon- 13, 14.

^d Who hath chosen him.] If we follow our author literally, we should translate those words, *to whom he hath approved himself.* See note on §. 11. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

^e Prove the righteous.] *Homines justos tentatio tribulationis.* Our author is constant to this reading, though the LXX agree with our translation, *That the trial of man is in his reasoning.* He agreeth here- in with the vulgar Latin, from which the Syriac and Arabic versions differ pretty much, as do the LXX also.

^f Proof of us.] Probationem, saith our author, following the original, *Jonipdu*, more strictly than we do, who translate it *experience.*

^g Fire befalling you.] *Arduum accidentem vobis:* so our author renders the *νεμερον*, of the original.

* Neither be disconcerted, *ne excitatis.* These words he hath added both here and in his 38th epistle, though

A. D. 252. *disconcerted, as if some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice as often as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding Joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, since the * name of the majesty and power of the Lord resteth upon you; for on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

§. 10.
That injuries
and persecu-
tions should
not be dread-
ed, because
our Lord hath
more power
to protect,
than the de-
vil hath to
assault us.
1 John 4. 4.
Psalm 118. 6.
Psalm 20. 7, 8.

IO. Greater (saith St. John in his epistle) is he that is in you, than he that is ^h in that wretched world. And in the cxviith (alias cxviiith) psalm; *The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me. And again; Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will praise the name of the Lord our God. Theirⁱ feet are are entangled, and they are fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.* Again the Spirit of God hath in stronger terms endeavoured to convince us, that our conflicts with the devil should not be terrible to us, but that when he proclaims war against us, there ariseth a just foundation of hope from such an encounter, as leading good men to the reward of their patience and perseverance in another and better world. Thus therefore we find the holy psalmist expressing his dependence on God, and saying; *Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. * One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.* And in the book of Exodus the scripture of God hath taught us, that we improve upon affliction, and are much the better for it; *The more they (the Egyptians) afflicted them, (the children of Israel) the more they multiplied, and the stronger they grew.* And in the book of Revelations, the protection of God is peculiarly promised to such as suffer; *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Nor doth our protection or security depend in this case upon any weaker bottom, than what we find laid down and described for us by the prophet Isaiah, who hath thus spoken in the name of the Lord; Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name, thou art mine; if thou passest through the waters, I am with thee; or thro' the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; If thou walkest thro' the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.* The same good God hath likewise promised in his gospel, that his assistance shall not be wanting to his servants in their several distresses; *When they deliver you up, take no thought how, or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak.* *For it is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* And again; *Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.* Thus we find again in the book of Exodus, that when Moses halted, and was afraid of going to his people upon the message of God to them, God encouraged him, saying; *Who hath given man a mouth? Or who hath made the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now*

Matt. 10. 19, 20.
Luke 21. 14, 15.

Exod. 4. 11, 12.

tho' there are now no Greek copies extant, which have them. * *The name of the Majesty.* We read it at present, *the Spirit of Glory*; *etc.* *ἡ δόξα* and *τὸ πνεῦμα* differ not so much, but that they might easily be mistaken one for the other. (Bishop Fell.) Dr. Mills conjectures, that the transcriber might write *πνεῦμα* on the margin, as intending a nearer accommodation of St. Peter's words to the prophesy they allude to, viz. *Isai. 11. 2. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, etc.* And thence, that the marginal observation might creep into the text.

^h *In that wretched world.* *In isto mundo.* *Isto*; is here a word of contempt.

ⁱ *Feet are entangled.* So the LXX, *αἰνὰ ἐνεδεδυμένοι* which our author justly renders, *illis copulati sunt pedes.* As if they were tyed together; which must needs occasion the fall of the persons whose feet were so tyed.

* *One thing.* *Μίαν αἰτιολογίαν* say the LXX, viz. *αἰτιολογία* is understood. And our author translates it literally *unam petii*; leaving *petitionem* to be understood. In 1 Kings 2. 20. the LXX expresses what here they leave to be understood; *Αἰτιολογίαν μίαν πινεῖν ἵνα αἰτιολογῶνται ὅτι* Bishop Fell.

¹ *The Egyptians.* Observe it as an usual figure with our author, to understand the devil, or the heathen world, by Egypt, and the Egyptians. And if we take it in this point of view, the citation is very properly applicable to the purpose it is brought for.

therefore go, and I will open thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Nor can it be conceived as any difficulty for God to open the mouth of a person devoted to his service, or to give one, who hath a desire to confess his name, the courage to go thro' it, and to speak boldly for it, who made a dumb ass to speak against the prophet Balaam, as we read the story recorded in the book of Numbers. Wherefore in the case of persecutions, let no one dwell so much upon the danger to which the devil would expose him, as upon the succour which God hath promised to lend him; his faith should rather be supported by a dependence on the protection of God, than intimidated by an apprehension of what man can do against him: Especially since the promises of God have encouraged us to expect that every man shall actually receive in proportion to the measure of his faith, and to what he believes he shall so receive; nor can any thing be imagined too great for Omnipotence to give, if the faith of the receiver do not stint the bounty of the giver. A. D. 252.
Numb. 22.30.

II. Our Lord hath foretold us thus much in his gospel, saying; *If the world hate you, know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word which I said unto you, the servant is not greater than the Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. And again; The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God good service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember, that I told you of them. And again; Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Once more; These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Thus when his disciples pressed him for some sign of his coming, and of the end of the world, we have his answer recorded at large in the gospel; He answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places; all these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold: But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. When ye shall therefore see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand) then let them, who be in Judea, flee into the mountains; let him, who is on the house-top, not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him, who is in the field, turn back to take his cloaths. But woe unto them who are with child, and to them who give suck in those days. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever* §. II.
That it was foretold that christians should be hated by the world; and that there was nothing new in this; since from the beginning of the world, good men have always suffered from bad ones.
John 15. 18, 19, 20.
John 16. 2, 3, 4.
Ibid. 10.
Ibid. 33.
Matt. 24. from v. 4. to v. 32.

[^m Know.] Our author (we see) translates *γινώσκω*, which is the original word, imperatively; whereas we render it indicatively; not, know ye, but, ye know.

A. D. 252. *shall be. And except those days should be shortned there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortned: Then if any man shall say unto you, lo! here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Be ye therefore upon your guard, behold I have told you all things before; therefore if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth; behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not: For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the son of man be; for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkned, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with the sound of a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Nor are these events which happen to christians new or unprecedented, nor ought they therefore to be surprizing; for it hath ever indeed been the course with good and upright men, who fear God, and maintain their integrity, and serve him according to the rules of true religion, to pass the narrow way, through infinite difficulties and embarrassments, injuries and pressures, and all kinds of punishment. Thus in the very infancy of the creation righteous Abel was killed by his brother, and Jacob was forced to fly for his life, and Joseph was sold for a slave, and King Saul persecuted good David, and Ahab strove hard to crush the prophet Elias, for his couragious and constant acknowledgments of the divine majesty. Zacharias, the priest, was killed between the temple and the altar, and became, himself, one of those victims which he had so often offered in that holy place. These are so many examples of good men martyred, and so many examples, to us who come after them, of faith and courage. Those three illustrious youths, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, so well agreeing in age and affection, and in a steady zeal for their religion, cried (we read) out of the midst of the fire, as if the flames had given them new spirit and courage, that they would serve God, would worship him only, and acknowledge none besides him. O King Nabuchodonozor, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; for the God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not; be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Thus also Daniel trusting in God, and full of the Holy Ghost, roundly answered the King, and said; I worship none but the Lord my God, who made heaven and earth. Tobit likewise, though his person was in a state of bondage and subjection to the King's power, yet retaining the freedom of his mind and spirit, makes, we read, his solemn confession to God, and preaches up, in a lofty strain, his majesty and power; In the land of my captivity (saith he) do I make my confession to him, and declare his might and majesty in a sinful nation. In the Maccabees we read of seven brethren of the same parentage, and the same virtues, adding, by their*

Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18.

Bell and dragon. 7. 5.

Tobit 13. 6.

[Be ye therefore upon your guard.] These words do not appear in any MSS. our author here hath likewise added the words *all things*.

[The narrow way.] This alludes to Matt. 7. 14. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.*

[Zacharias the priest.] Tertullian, before our author, had in like manner dwelt upon these, and such as these, examples. In *Scorpiac.* c. 8. *David (saith he) is persecuted, Elias sent into exile, Jeremias stoned, Isaiah sawed asunder, Zacharias slain between the temple and the altar, &c.* Bp. Fell.

[Adding, by their martyrdom, the highest perfection to that mystick number.] *Septenarium numerum sacramento perfectæ consummationis implantes, viz.* By the martyrdom of all the seven, martyrdom was that highest perfection given to this number, so famous among those who dealt in the mystical signification of

their martyrdom; the highest perfection to that mystick number. Thus in the creation of the world *seven* days were spent, and in those *seven* days *seven* thousand years were figuratively included. Thus the angels who stand in the presence of God are in number *seven*; and the lamps for the ark of the testimony were *seven*; so were the golden candlesticks in the book of *Revelations*, and the pillars upon which *Solomon* hath represented wisdom building her house. Thus in the case from which these hints were started, the *seven* brethren point to us *seven* churches; and so we read in the first book of *Samuel*, That the barren hath born *seven*; and in *Isaiab*, That *seven* women shall take hold of one man, and desire to be called by his name. Thus the apostle *St. Paul* bearing in his mind this remarkable and distinguished number, hath written precisely to *seven* churches. And in the *Revelations* our blessed Lord directs his heavenly instructions to *seven* churches, and their *seven* angels, the very number which we find in these brethren; that their martyrdom might be attended with every circumstance which could, in any manner, contribute to its just perfection! Observe moreover, that with the *seven* children is joined their mother, as the common root and fountain from whence they all proceeded; she her self was first, and single, and under that view represents to us the church, which, according to our Lord's own word and appointment, was founded upon a rock. Nor is it of small account in this matter to observe, that in these their sufferings, the mother only, and not the father, is found accompanying her children: For indeed, martyrs, who, by being so, approve themselves the children of God, have none but God to reckon for their Father, as our Lord hath recommended to them in his gospel, saying; *Call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven.* But now let us consider how great and marvellous were the evidences which these brethren and their mother gave of the power of their faith, and what a noble testimony they severally bore to it! King *Antiochus*, or rather Antichrist himself in the person of *Antiochus*, was their enemy, and attempted to defile the mouths of those glorious martyrs, which had born such a gallant testimony to their religion, with swine's flesh; and after having cruelly tormented them with scourges and whips, and found that he could not gain upon them; he next ordered pans and caldrons to be made hot, which forthwith being heated, he commanded him who spake first, and gave the greatest provocation to the King by his boldness and resolution, to be brought to the fire and fried in it, first cutting out his tongue, which had made a publick confession of his faith and his religion: This fell out much to the martyr's honour, that his tongue, wherewith he had solemnly acknowledged God, should go before him to God, as it were, in a natural order. Afterwards, when they came to the second, they invented yet sharper torments, and before they put his other members to the torture, they pulled off the skin of his head with the hair, and scalped him, bending against that part a

A. D. 252.

Sam. 2. 5.

Isai. 4. 1.

Matt. 23. 9.

2. Matt. 7. 13.

3.

4.

5.

7.

of numbers; this I take to be the sense. Nor ought it to raise any one's surprize, that our author should indulge himself in a little excursion upon this number, and upon the several mystical applications of it; since the *Pythagoreans*, men of no small renown in philosophy, did the same; only as they fetched their images and resemblances from their own books and writers, our author deduces his out of the bible.

[*Seven thousand years figuratively included.*] Viz. That the world should last so long: Our author having elsewhere declared for 6000 years, we must either interpret the last 1000 of the millennium, or else of the day of judgment, which some thought would last 1000 years.

[*Seven churches.*] Viz. *Romans*, *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and *Thessalonians*. Bp. Fell. So that our author (I observe) did not ascribe the *Hebrews* to *St. Paul*.

[*Upon a rock.*] *Super petram.* Manus here, against the faith of all copies, besides a single one derived from the *Vatican* (a very suspicious place!) would fain have it *super Petrum*, and thereupon would build very strange conclusions: But till some better proof is offered in support of them, than what either he, or *Onuphrius Pavinius*, who hath stepped in to his aid, hath yet produced, it will be enough to deny their inferences, and to put their abettors upon farther proof of them. To play with the homonymy of words, and to claim to the person of *Peter*, and thence to his supposed successors, rights of an exorbitant kind, merely from the similitude of *petra* and *Petrus*, shews a good will to a bad cause, but to reasonable men will shew nothing else.

parti-

A. D. 252. particular malice: For as Christ is the head of man, and God is the head of Christ, they who singled out that part in the martyr whereupon to wreck their fury, will be judged to have vented upon God and Christ, whatever of contempt or rage they poured upon *his* particular head. The martyr himself we find exulting in the triumphs of his martyrdom, and in the assured hopes he had formed upon the promises of God, that he should attain a blessed resurrection; and therefore he boldly cried out, and said; *Thou, like a fury, takest us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto life everlasting.* The third, when he was required, put out his tongue, and that right soon; for he had learnt from his brother to despise the pain of having it cut out; he also held forth his hands to be cut off, with great constancy and courage: Happy, be! in the nature and manner of his punishment, which resembled our blessed Lord in the expansion of his hands. The fourth, alike and with equal magnanimity contemning the torments they had prepared for him, addressed himself to the King, and quite confounded him, by saying; *It is good being put to death by men to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by him; as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life.* The fifth, besides his patient bearing the cruelty of the King, and contemning the several tortures they had contrived for him, had a spirit of prophecy moreover given him, in virtue of which he foretold to the King, that the vengeance of God would soon overtake him; *Thou hast power (saith he) over men; thou art corruptible, thou dost what thou wilt; yet think not that our nation is forsaken of God: But abide a while, and behold his great power, how he will torment thee and thy seed.* How great must we conceive the martyr's consolation and refreshment to have been, who could find leisure and liberty to divert from the pain of his own sufferings, to look forwards, and foretel the punishment of his tormentors? In the sixth, we may admire, not the courage only, but the great humility of the martyr; who claimed nothing to himself in the whole transaction, boasted not of any honours due to his gallant confession; rather ascribed his sufferings to his sins, and to God the glory of avenging afterwards his blood. In which example he hath taught us, that modesty is the grace of martyrdom; that the martyr may be secure of being avenged, and should not boast nor be presumptuous upon the merit of his suffering; *Be not (saith he) deceived without cause; for we suffer these things for our selves, having sinned against our God; but think not, thou who takest in hand to strive against God, that thou shalt escape unpunished.* Nor were the conduct and courage of the mother less to be admired, than what have hitherto been related of her sons; since neither the weakness of her sex, nor her several preceding losses, restrained her from looking upon the death of her children without any shock upon her resolution; nor from considering their sufferings, as their highest honours: And thus her eyes made her as much a martyr in the account of God, as the various torments which her children underwent, made *them* so. When *six* were killed, and *one* only now remained to her, whom the King had tempted, with large offers of riches, honours and preferments, that his cruelty might have the glory of making at least one single conquest, and would fain have prevailed with her to join with him in his endeavours to gain upon this resolute youth; she did indeed add her prayers to the King's; but she *so* added them as became the mother of martyrs; as became a person who her self retained an awful reverence for the law of God; and, in fine, as became a mother, who loved her children with a strong and rational, rather than a fond or a soft, affection. She did indeed beseech him; but it was, that he would persist in his confession of God; that he would not disjoin himself from the rest of his brethren, nor lose his share of the honours they had attained to; for then she reckoned that she should be to all valuable purposes the mother of *seven* children, if it should appear that she had brought them forth to God, and to his service, rather

rather than to the ^v world, and to its several vanities and pomps. Wherefore ^{A. D. 252.} observe her fortifying his courage against the approaching storm, and preparing him for a more auspicious birth, than that whereby she brought him into this world, saying; *O, my son, have pity upon me, who bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee suck three years, and nourished thee, and brought thee up unto this age: I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all which is therein, and consider that God made them of things which were not; and so he made mankind likewise; thus it shall be, that thou wilt not fear this tormentor, but being worthy of thy brethren, wilt take thy death, that I may receive thee again in mercy with thy brethren.* Great commendations were doubtless due to the mother, for this exhortation and encouragement of her son to the sublimest pitch of virtue; but more and greater, if possible, yet were due to her, for her regular and steady progress in the faith and fear of God; for promising neither to her self nor to her son surviving, any advantage from the death of the six foregoing martyrs, or any privilege of receding from the strict line of duty, ^{27, 28, 29;} upon a prospect of their favourable intercession; she rather persuaded her son to partake with his brethren in their sufferings, that so he might be found a partaker with them in the retributions of the day of judgment. After this, the mother her self follows her children in their death; nor was it fit indeed to be otherwise; she, who had brought martyrs into the world, and helped to make them so, had a title to share with them in the honours of their order, and to go *after* those, whom she had sent to God *before* her. And that no man may impose upon himself by ^x purchased tickets, or by any other delusive means which shall be offered him for an evasion; let us consider, I pray, the case of *Eleazar*, whom the officers of the King would fain have persuaded, to *bring flesh of his own provision, such as was lawful for him to use, and to make as if he did eat of the flesh taken from the sacrifice commanded by the King*; but he would by no means come into this evasive practice, saying, That it *became not his age, nor his honour, in any wise to dissemble*, whereby others might be offended, and led into sin, thinking that *Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, was gone to a strange religion,* deserting and betraying the law of his God; he thought it not worth while to purchase the continuance of a few moments in life, at the terrible expence of God's wrath, and his everlasting vengeance. Wherefore, after a long struggle with his torments, when he was just ready to expire in them, he groaned, and said, *O Lord, to thee it is manifest, who hast holy knowledge, that whereas I might have been delivered from death, I now endure sore pains in body by being beaten; but in soul am well content to endure these things, because I fear thee.* ^{24;} A mighty proof and example this! of the integrity of his faith, and the purity of his conscience; that his thoughts were not then fixed so much upon King *Antiochus*, as upon God his judge; that he considered of how small importance it would be to him to impose upon men, so long as God, who alone is to be feared, and who searcheth the heart, can never be deceived, nor mocked! If therefore we would exemplify the devotion of our souls to God, and would tread in the footsteps of his faithful servants; let us take these instances along with us, proceed, as they did, in the same tract of suffering, and follow them step by step thro' all the paces of ^{30;}

^v World, and to its several vanities and pomps.] We have no one word which will reach the force and spirit of our author's *seculum*. By which he means the world in the worst sense of it; in the sense, wherein at baptism christians renounce it: i. e. indeed the wicked world with all its pomps and vanities.

^w Upon a prospect of their favourable intercession.] Here our author touches upon the case of those lapsed, who had procured the intercession of martyrs for their re-admission to the communion of the church, before they had gone through a course of regular penance. He commends the mother of these seven brethren, upon a topick directly contrary to the practice of those lapsed.

^x Purchased tickets, or other means.] See note on §. 14. of the case of the lapsed, [owned himself the door] where this case of purchased tickets, and other means of evasion, are described and explained.

- A. D. 125. their blessed martyrdom; and let us consider this moreover as a distinguished honour of the age we live in, that whereas antient examples are registred, and we can count their numbers; yet such hath been the proficiency of our faith and resolution, that no list can be taken of christian martyrs, nor can the power of numbers bring them within any settled calculation: The book of *Revel.* 7. 9, 10, *velations* having testified thus much of them, where 'tis said; *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest: And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. If then the number of christian martyrs be so truly great, let no man hence forwards object or pretend, that there is any mighty difficulty in being one, since there are so many, that they are even innumerable.*
- §. 12. 12. Thus the Holy Ghost hath intimated by the mouth of Solomon, saying; *Though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded; for God proved them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering; and in time there shall be a due regard to them; they shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever.* Again in the same book we may find described the vengeance which shall be taken upon our adversaries, who have persecuted and troubled us, together with their astonishment and repentance; *Then (saith the author) shall the righteous stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted them, and made no account of their labours; when they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their salvation, so much beyond all they looked for: And they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves; These are they whom we sometimes had in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted their life madness, and their end to be without honour: How are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun hath not shined upon us. We have been wearied in the way of wickedness and destruction, yea we have gone through deserts where there lay no way, but we have not known the way of the Lord. What hath pride profited us? Or what good have riches, with our vaunting, brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow.* Thus in the cxvth (alias cxvith) psalm, the value of our sufferings, and the recompence assigned them, are well expressed to us in these words; *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.* And in the cxvth (alias cxvith) psalm, we have hinted to us both the dark state of our struggle, and the light one of our joy and victory; *They who sow in tears shall reap in*
- What a mighty recompence attends martyrdom, and other holy men, after the struggles and sufferings of this life.*
- Wisd. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.*
- Wisd. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.*
- Psal. 116. 15.*
- Psal. 126. 5, 6.*

[There shall be a due regard to them.] In tempore erit respectus illorum. Here our author departeth from the LXX, who read it, as we translate it from them, in the time of their visitation they shall shine; and agreeth with the vulgar Latin: He doth the same as to this citation, in §. 15. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

[Made no account.] Here again our author is in with the vulgar Latin rather than the LXX, absolute labours, which is not quite the same with the LXX's ἀδύνατον, τὸν νότον.

[The sun.] The vulgar Latin here, which our author otherwise follows in this citation, reads sol intelligit; the LXX simply ἡλίου, and our author doth the same, as do the Arabic and Syriac versions.

joy.

joy. As they went forth they wept, scattering their seed; but as they come again they shall come with joy, bringing their sheaves with them. Again in the cxviiith (alias cxixth) psalm; Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord: Blessed are they who keep his testimonies, and who seek him with their whole heart. Our Lord in the gospel, who is both the avenger and rewarder of our sufferings, hath likewise thus declared himself; Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And again; Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall quite expel you from it, and shall reproach your name as evil for the son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven. And again; Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. Nor are the promises of God confined to those only who actually suffer and die for his name's sake; but his faithful servants who retain their zeal and devotion to his service, and leave their all, though they should not happen to suffer in any other respect for it, are however entitled by his gracious promise and construction, to the recompence and honour of the martyr's crown; for observe his favourable declaration on the behalf of such; There is no man who hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the kingdom of Gods sake, who shall not (likewise) receive seven times more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. And again in the book of revelations we find it thus written; I saw the souls of them who were slain for the sake of Jesus, and for the word of God. These indeed are set in the first rank, but then are added whoever had not worshipped the image of the beast, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ. He affirms all to live and reign with Christ; not only such as are slain, but whosoever steadily persevere in the faith and fear of God, and as such do not worship the image of the beast, nor pay any obedience to those sinful and fatal edicts, which command the adoration of him.

This the holy apostle well hath proved: He; who through the peculiar favour of God, was caught up into paradise, and into the third heaven, and there professes himself to have heard unutterable things; he, who glories in having his faith assured to him by the evidence of sense, and hath delivered down to us with exact truth what he had seen and heard. Now he expressly tells us, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us: Who therefore would not strive with all his might to arrive at such glory, to become a friend of God, to partake with Christ immediately in his joy, and to enter upon the recompence of futurity, after the torments and sufferings of this present life? If soldiers esteem it their honour to return in triumph to their native countrey, after having subdued their enemy; how much more illustrious and more desirable must it be, to return in triumph to paradise, after a conquest gained over our great adversary the devil; to recover from him those trophies of victory which Adam lost by his sin, and to place them upon the ground from which our

^b Quite expel.] So our author, expulerint. I make it as an higher degree of what had been said before of their separating, quite expelling being somewhat more than so; and perhaps our author might have in view those several degrees of excommunication, which were in known use with the Jews, and might interpret our Saviour as here alluding to them. He hath indeed transposed the words as now they stand, and instead of *ἀποδιώκει καὶ ἐκβάλλει*, he read them *ἐκβάλλει καὶ ἀποδιώκει*.

^c And leave their all.] Here our author modestly touches upon his own case, who had been forced to retire from the rage of the persecution; which he takes all occasions of vindicating, because his enemies were forward to take all occasions of loading him with censure for it.

^d Partake with Christ immediately.] This was esteemed the peculiar privilege of martyrs, who were the only persons supposed to enter directly upon a state of exemption from such uneasiness as other men were thought subject to. See §. 14. [case of the lapsed.] Note [whilst he is yet in the land of the living.] And of the plague, §. 10. Notes [place of refreshment, and terrors of antichrist.] And the last note but one upon this tract, [loss of the time, &c.]

^e The ground.] Vix. Paradise, which was thought the immediate receptacle of martyrs.

A. D. 252. first parent was beaten? To make there to God the best and most acceptable oblation; even a faith untainted, and a courage which hath stood the proof, with all the praises which are due to such a steady zeal? To accompany our Lord and Saviour, when he cometh to take vengeance on his enemies? To be his assessor upon his judgment seat? To enjoy the privilege of a joint-heir with him? In fine, to be equalled with angels, patriarchs, apostles, prophets, and with them to rejoice in a common possession of the kingdom of heaven? Where is now the persecution, or where are the torments, which these thoughts and expectations will not vanquish? A mind well inured to them cannot but be firm and steady; and a full assurance of faith will fortify it against all the menaces of the world, and all the terrors of its ghostly enemy. Be it then, that persecutions confine us to ⁸ this or that part of the earth; yet *heaven still is open to us*; let antichrist storm and threaten us; we have Christ however, for our protector and defender; let death come when it will, so long as immortality follows close upon it; if the person slain in the cause of God is snatched out of this world, yet paradise is given him in lieu of it; and tho' he loses a temporal life, he hath ample recompence in the renovation of his nature, and thence in an eternal weight of glory. How exceedingly great is the dignity and advantage of going hence in joy and triumph, superior to all the difficulties of the passage; to close in a moment those eyes, which had here no better entertainment than this worthless world could afford them; then to open them again immediately, and to behold with them God, and his Son Christ Jesus? This blessed change is all transacted in a moment! As quick as thought you are removed from this earthly tabernacle, and fixed in celestial mansions. These things should be the perpetual subjects of our thought and study; we should meditate on them day and night. If the soldier of Christ be found thus armed, and prepared to encounter the assaults of persecution, 'tis utterly impossible he should be ever foiled by them. Or if God shall call him to himself before the onset; the faith which had fitted him for sustaining the shock of it, will not (he may assure himself) go unrewarded. God, his judge, will forthwith assign him his recompence, ^h without suffering him to wait for it, [*from his death to his resurrection.*] For in the case of persecution, the same crown is given to the *victorious*; which in the more peaceable and settled seasons of the church, is awarded to the truly *conscientious*.

^f *Where is now the persecution, &c.*] St. Ignatius just before his martyrdom breathed in this strain his pious aspirations towards his approaching crown; *I would* (saith he in his epistle to the Romans) *even help the beasts which are prepared to destroy me; I hope they will make short work with me; I would do any thing in my power to prevail with them to devour me speedily; and if they do it not readily, I am resolved to force them.* Excuse me, I beseech you; I know what is most for my own interest and advantage; now I begin to feel my self in earnest a disciple of Christ's, when nothing moves me of things visible or invisible, so I may gain Jesus, my Lord and Saviour. Let fire, or the cross, or the fury of wild beasts, or the tearing of my limbs, or the cutting of my flesh, or the washing of my bones, or the utmost torture of my whole body, or all the cruelties which the devil himself can contrive or execute, be my portion; so Jesus Christ be my portion too. §. 5.

⁸ *This or that part of the earth.*] *Clauduntur persecutionibus terra.* Sometimes the persons persecuted were *deportati in insulam*, carried to some remote island, whence they might not stir; which was Chrysostom's case, whilst under the displeasure of the Empress; at other times they were proscribed, and no place might safely receive them; *interdictum aqua & igni.* And in both these cases, the earth might be said to be shut up from them; or they shut out from the privilege of enjoying it.

^h *Without suffering him to wait for it*] *from his death to his resurrection.*] The words inclosed in the hooks are added by me, as explanatory of our author's, *sine damno temporis.* Tertullian in his book of the soul had said, that small offences were punished with a delay of the resurrection, c. 58. That there were two states of the inferi, for good and bad men, and that paradise was a third state; the only key to which was martyrdom, c. 55. This was a state of greater perfection and bliss, (tho' not absolutely complete) than the state of the inferi, which had some degree of uneasy expectation in it. This state of paradise our author makes the privilege of martyrs, as Tertullian had done before him; they gained their time by it; that delay, which others were forced to wait for, was to them anticipated, and they entered immediately upon much higher degrees of happiness than others, without those uneasy expectations. Yet that then their happiness was not complete, we learn from the cry of the souls under the altar, *Revel. 6. 10.* See note on §. 16. of the book of alms and good works, [*restoring them to paradise.*]

ⁱ *Truly conscientious.*] *Viz.* such as are in heart and mind prepared for martyrdom, and would undergo, if called to, it; but only want the opportunity.



The Tract to DEMETRIAN.

A famine had succeeded the plague, which gave occasion to our author's tract upon that subject; and the miseries of both were charged upon a neglect of the publick sacrifices, which naturally devolved the crime upon christians. This Demetrian was an acquaintance of St. Cyprian's, bred, as he was, to the practice of the law, and now in some office of power, which he executed with great severity against christians; possibly he might be one of the assessors to the governor of the province, or a judge of the lower order; but proconsul he could not be; for then St. Cyprian would never have addressed him with so little ceremony as he doth in this treatise; which was designed to rescue his brethren from the imputation of drawing down the vengeance of heaven upon the people with whom they dwell. Now as a famine is the effect of a plague, after some continuance of the latter, when agriculture comes to be neglected for want of hands to manage it; I rather incline to place this tract with our right reverend editor in the year 253, than with our most learned annalist to assign it to the year 252. He saith indeed, that it should be placed after the tract upon the Lord's prayer, and before the tract of the plague, and that Pontius hath hinted as much in our author's life; but as I cannot find, that Pontius hath so hinted; and as some time must be assigned to the continuance of the plague, before the famine could be grievous, or matter of common objection; I think our editor proceeds with the greater probability, in supposing the year 253 commenced, before our author wrote this tract to Demetrian.

A. D. 253.



Have often despised you, *Demetrian*, with the noise and impious clamour raised by you, against the one true God; as thinking it much better to pass over in silence your ignorance and error, than to provoke your rage by labouring your conviction. And in this purpose of mine I was confirmed by holy scripture, which saith;

The reason of the author's former silence, and his present writing.

Speak not in the ears of a fool; lest when he hears thee, he despise the wisdom of thy words. And again; Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Thus we are directed to keep what is holy within our own breasts, and not expose it to be trodden under foot, by hogs and dogs; our Lord having thus prescribed to us; *Give not that which is holy unto dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine; lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* Now as you have often visited me, rather with design of disputing and contradicting every thing, than of learning any thing; and as you always chose to obtrude upon me boldly your own sense, rather than to hear mine with patience and attention, I judged it impertinent and insignificant to maintain a dispute with you; since I could as easily silence the noise of the roaring sea, as put any stop to your rage and clamour, by reason or discourse. It must needs be lost labour, which is employed in offering light to the blind, discourse to the deaf, or wisdom to an irrational creature; inasmuch as an irrational creature cannot understand, the blind can receive no benefit from light, nor can the deaf hear. Upon these considerations, I have often held my peace, and have only opposed my

*Prov. 23. 9.
Prov. 26. 4.*

Matt. 7. 6.

B b b

patience

A. D. 253. *patience to your fury*; as knowing well it would be in vain to attempt instructing the unteachable, restraining impiety by any persuasives of religion, or controlling your mad excursions by mild and gentle treatment. But since you suggest a general complaint against us, and charge upon us, the wars, the distempers and the famine, wherewith the world is at present distressed; it is no longer fit to be silent under such imputations; lest our backwardness in defending our cause, should be construed a distrust of its goodness; and our contempt of *false* accusations should pass among some for a confession of their *truth*. Wherefore I answer, *Demetrian*, to you, and to the rest, whom you perhaps, by your injurious insinuations, have joined to your party, and made our enemies; who yet, I hope, are not so far prejudiced against us, but that they will hear our reasons; since one would think that he who is excited to mischief, by lies and calumnies; should, upon a true representation, more easily be persuaded to what is good.

§. 2.
An answer to
the imputati-
on laid upon
christians of
bringing those
evils upon the
world where-
with it was
molested in its
declining age.

2. You place to our account those misfortunes and distresses, under which the world at present labours; because, forsooth, we will not worship your gods. Now this part of your charge is easily answered: As you are a stranger to the knowledge of God, and of the truth, you ought to be told, that the world is now in its declining age, and therefore hath not the same degrees of strength and vigour which were once enjoyed by it. We need not labour the proof of this point, nor produce any evidences for it out of the holy scriptures; since indeed the thing speaks it self, and the declension of all things in the world bears ample testimony to its approaching dissolution: the seasons of the year are not the same as formerly; the winter-rains descend not in sufficient quantity to cherish the seeds which are lodged in the ground; the summer-sun gives not its usual heat; the temperature of the spring hath not its accustomed gaiety, nor doth autumn abound as formerly, in plenty of fruits. The mountains produce less marble, the mines less gold and silver than heretofore; the veins of ore become daily impoverished and exhausted, and there is every where an universal failure: The fields want hands to manure them, camps grow empty for want of soldiers, the sea hath no mariners to fill it. There is no integrity left in the courts of judicature, no justice observed in verdicts; friendship, arts and good manners, are generally declining. Is it imaginable, think you, that the world *grown old*, should retain its powers in the same state of activity and vigour which in its *youth* belonged to them? They must needs be lessened as their end approaches: Thus the rays of the sun are more languid and feeble towards its setting, and the moon in its decrease looks with its face, as it were, emaciated, and every day its appearance dwindles; the tree, which once was green and fruitful, upon the decay of its radical moisture, withers away with time, and, as age overtakes it, languishes and dies. And the fountain, which for a great while abounded, and even over-flowed with water, finds at last a deficiency, and can scarce afford a drop. This is the general law of the world, and of all the things in it; appointed for *it* and *them*, by a decree of providence; that whatever *rises* must *set*, whatever had a *beginning* must have an *end*; and whatever subsists by reparation and addition to it, must decay with age: And thus what once was in a state of vigour, must come to a state of weakness; what once was great, must be less; and what is thus weakened and lessened, must have a period. Yet you are so unjust to christians as to lay upon *them* the fault of things declining and diminishing, when the world it self

[The world is now in its declining age.] It hath already been observed, that the christians of the first centuries believed the day of judgment near approaching, as indeed the apostles themselves seem to have been of the same opinion. Agreeably to which notion, they likewise thought, that the world was not made for a much longer continuance, but was declining in its strength and powers; and though the day of judgment would overtake it before its natural dissolution, yet they seem to have apprehended, that it could not hold out much longer, if a *violent* death did not prevent its *natural*.

is,

is, thro' age, declining. As well might old men lay the fault of their old age upon christians, and charge them with being the causes of it; as well might they object to christians, that they cannot hear so readily, cannot walk so fast, cannot see so quick, have not so much strength and vigour in their limbs and bowels, as when they were younger; that, whereas in former times men lived to eight hundred or nine hundred years, they can now scarce reach one hundred. Now we see even boys gray headed, they shed their hair when it should be growing, and grow old before they are well grown up. Thus as soon as we are born, we are hastening apace to our dissolution; and whatever hath life takes its share of imperfection and degeneracy from the declining condition of the world it lives in; so that no one should be surprized at any defects he observes among *particulars*, when the *whole* mass of things is declining, and the world it self is so near its period.

A. D. 253.

3. As to what may be objected, from the frequency and long continuance of wars amongst us; from the melancholly views which scarcity and famine give us; from the waste of our health and spirits, by the increase of various distempers; and more particularly from that consuming illness which makes at present such a dreadful havock; (to all these objections) take this one answer; That they have, each of them, been foretold; and that we thence expect, in the latter days, all sorts of evil to befall us; as well as that the wrath of God should more and more be kindled against mankind, and discover it self in various kinds and forms of punishment, upon the nearer approach of the day of judgment. These are mischiefs which do not befall the world, as you with great ignorance and falsehood complain they do, because your gods are not worshipped by *us*; but because, indeed, the true and only God is not worshipped by *you*. For since he is really the Lord and governour of the universe, and every thing in it proceeds by his appointment and direction, and nothing can come to pass without his agency, or at least his permission; whatsoever tokens appear of his anger, can never be occasioned by *us* who worship him; but should rather be considered as the punishments of *your* wickedness, who neither seek after, nor fear him, nor can by any means be prevailed with to leave your idolatrous and superstitious worship, and to come into the acknowledgment of the one true God, who is so justly entitled to all our adorations. Hear him therefore speaking with his own mouth, admonishing and instructing you to this purpose, and saying; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* And again; *Thou shalt have none other gods besides me.* Once more; *Go not (saith he) after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not with the works of your hands, to destroy you utterly.* Thus another of his prophets, being full of the Holy Ghost, hath denounced his wrath in the following terms; *Thus saith the Lord God Almighty, Because my house is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house; therefore shall the heaven over you be stayed from her dew, and the earth be stayed from her fruit; and I will bring the sword upon the land, and upon the corn, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon men, and upon the cattle, and upon all the labour of their hands.* A third prophet hath repeated these menaces, and said; *I will cause it to rain upon one city, and cause it not to rain upon another; one part shall be rained upon, and another which shall not be rained upon shall wither: So two or three cities shall gather together unto one city to drink water, but shall not be satisfied; yet do ye not return unto me, saith the Lord.* Here you may observe your selves threatened

§. 3.

That the true cause of so many evils is the just vengeance of God upon the contempt of the christian religion.

^b Deut. 6. 13. Ibid. 10 and 20. and Luke 4. 8.

Exod. 20. 3. Jerem. 25. 6.

Haggai 1. 9, 10, 11.

Amos 4. 7, 8.

^b Deut. 6. 13. Exod. 20. 3. Jerem. 25. 6. Haggai 1. 9, 10, 11. Amos 4. 7, 8. Let no one think it strange, or censure our author as arguing improperly, when he quotes texts of scripture to an heathen, not convinced of their authority. For the prophecies and precepts of the two testaments, when they suited so well with the case and circumstance, which they are brought to illustrate, had a very good tendency to enlighten and convince an heathen, when he should observe from them, that his case was beforehand described and delineated in the books of holy scripture; to which, by the way, this *Demetrian* was

A. D. 253. ned with the wrath of God, for not returning to him; and yet, whilst you thus continue in your obstinate neglect of his authority, you pretend to complain and wonder, at the rain being with-held from you, at the droughth prevailing, at the feebleness of the earth in her unfinished and raw productions, at the vintage being spoiled by unseasonable and tempestuous weather, at the loss of your olives and oyls by storms and whirlwinds, at the stoppage of your fountains for want of water to supply them, at the corruption of your air by putrid vapours, and thence at the destruction of mankind by epidemical distempers; whereas you should consider, that these are the judicial effects of those raging provocations which your sins have given to God; and that his wrath is yet more and more enflamed against you, when such manifest tokens of his vengeance do not awaken nor convert you. For he hath, himself, declared in his holy scriptures, that these dispensations are designed for the correction of the obstinate, and for the punishment in general of all offenders: *Jerem. 2. 30.* hear him therefore saying; *In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction.* And the same holy prophet and servant of God, who committed to writing the foregoing passage, hath made upon this case the following complaint and answer; *Ibid. 5. 3.* *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction.* Behold now in your own case, the parallel to this! God hath stricken you, but you fear him not. You have bruises and stripes in abundance from his hand; and yet you are unconcerned at them; and you regard, you discern, not the hand which chastens you. If then he should in no manner interpose with his vengeance against offenders; to what an amazing height of wickedness (think we) would the prospect of an absolute impunity raise and embolden them?

§. 4.
That men are unreasonable in their expectations of having all things answer their wishes, when they will not acknowledge that God, who hath all things at his disposal.

4. You have the confidence to complain, that the fountains of water do not flow at this time to your mind and liking, nor the rain descend as you would have it; that the air is not quite so wholsom, the earth not altogether so fruitful; that the elements are not so perfectly obsequious to your advantage and pleasure, as you would desire of them severally to be: Mean while you forget putting the question to your own heart, whether you serve, as you ought, that God, by whom, and thro' whom, every thing else is made subservient to you? You expect from your servants all possible obedience; that a man like your self should be in a state of perfect subjection to you; tho' you *both* came into the world, and shall go out of it again, upon equal terms; tho' your bodies are formed of the same materials, and your souls have one common extraction; yet except every thing be done for you just as you would have it, you storm and rage, make large demands upon your dependents, and exact the most punctual compliance from them; which if they fail in paying, they are sure to suffer for it; to be scourged, or starved, or choaked; to be loaden with irons, and it may be, to rot in a noisom dungeon; all this while you confess, you consider not, that God is your Master, tho' you exercise upon a man, like your self, such a savage tyranny. Wherefore be your sufferings from the hand of God never so severe, tho' he should pour upon you at present all the vials of his wrath, you have deserved the worst of them; and it concerns you farther to take notice, that if they have no effect, and do not with all their terrors turn you to God, he hath still a prison in reserve for you, from whence you never shall come out, a fire which never shall be quenched, and an everlasting punishment, which no cries will ever mitigate, where God will not hear you, because you will not

was far from being quite a stranger, as having much and often conversed with our author upon this subject, (for so, we are told, he had done in §. 1.) and therefore *Lactantius* and *Jerom* have passed an unguarded censure upon our author, where they have found fault with his method of reasoning upon this subject. Since even the *precepts* of the gospel, falling in so exactly with the case, as stated, carried some weight with them; and much more the *prophecies* of the Old Testament, which were committed to writing, so long before the case in question.

now hear him, who by the voice of his prophet hath called to you, and A.D. 253.
 said; *Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath* Hosea 4. 1, 2,
a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, 3, 4
nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. But swearing, and lying, and
killing, and stealing, and committing adultery have overspread it, and blood
is mingled with blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, with all its inha-
bitants, with the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, yea even the
fishes of the sea shall be taken away; whilst all are so involved in guilt,
that there is no one left to judge, or to reprove another. God, you may
 observe, doth here declare his displeasure, that *there is no knowledge of him*
in the land, that his name is not confessed nor feared. He resents and ar-
 raigns these heavy crimes of lying, lusting and cheating; he threatens the
 cruelty, the impiety and madness of the age; yet no one is reformed by it.
 You see and feel the execution of his menaces, and yet your *present* evils
 have no such effect upon you, as to put you upon any care of guarding against
future. In the midst of those heavy pressures which lie so hard upon you,
 that you are almost stifled by them, you yet find leisure for a farther progress in
 wickedness, and *(even in the height of your danger)* for turning your censures
 and reflections ^dupon others rather than your selves. You think it hard, that
 God should be displeased with you, as if your ill lives had really deserved
 his favour, or the measure of your sufferings had exceeded that of your pro-
 vocations.

5. You, whose province it is to be a judge of others, exercise for once
 your office upon your own person, and judge your self; look impartially in-
 to the secrets of your conscience; and, as now there is no where left any
 fear or shame in offending, and men sin with as much confidence as if they
 were to make a merit of it; I beseech you to see your self, whose ^egarb is
 so effeminate and transparent, that every body else may easily see you. And
 you will find, I am persuaded, upon the self-examination which I am now
 recommending to you, that you are either bloated with pride, or that cove-
 tousness makes you an extortioner, or that anger provokes you to cruelty,
 or that gaming tempts you to profuseness, or that wine leads you into ex-
 cesses, or that envy, lust, or cruelty, carries you into diverse enormities: and
 can you then wonder, that the wrath of God against man increases, when
 the offences of man against God increase; or that the vengeance of the one
 rises in proportion to the provocations of the other? You complain of new
 wars and enemies; when yet, alas! if they did not appear from *abroad*, they
 would be found at *home*; and if you could suppress at pleasure the attempts
 of foreigners and *Barbarians*, you would have a much harder task of it to
 stop the injuries and insolences of domestick oppressors: You think the bar-
 renness of the earth, and the prevailing famine, great and mighty grievances;
 as if they really made more havock, or did more mischief, than your greed-
 iness of gain, and your monopolies of corn, which raise the price of it as
 much as the greatest scarcity. The heavens, you object, are shut up, and
 withhold the rain from you; whilst yet you suffer your barns to be shut up,

^{§. 5.}
 Our author
 appeals to the
 conscience of
 Demetrian.

^c *That there is no one left.* *Ut nemo judicat, nemo revincat.* In which our author followeth the LXX.
 And I suppose I have given my reader the sense wherein he understood the passage; which is all I am
 obliged to do as a translator; tho', I must confess, that his sense, as well as that of the LXX, is not
 very easy to be come at. *Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another;* which is our reading, taken from
 the *Hebrew*; are words which seem to imply the same general corruption.

^d *Upon others rather than your selves.* Here our author satyrizes upon the heathens censure of chris-
 tians, as bringing those judgments upon the world; when it was really their own (*viz.* the heathens)
 wickedness, which provoked the wrath of God.

^e *Garb so effeminate and transparent.* Here again our author satyrizes upon the delicacy and immodesty
 of his adversary's dress; who, to avoid the excessive heats of the country, would scarce put on
 what was sufficient to cover his nakedness. His cloathing was so thin, that it was in a manner trans-
 parent. *Juvenal* hath handsomely exposed this sort of effeminacy in his second satyr. (*Bishop Fell.*) The
 whole §. goes on in this way, exposing the particular vices of *Demetrian*, and the exorbitant use he
 made of his power, by indulging his several vices with it.

A. D. 253. and to with-hold from the inhabitants of the earth, what should nourish and sustain them. There is not, you say, the usual increase, either of vegetables or of animals; why! if there were; the poor, you are sensible, would be never the better for it. You are disturbed at the continuance and progress of this same epidemical distemper; when yet it discovers the latent wickedness of some, and gives an occasion to the increase of it amongst others; as the sick have no compassion extended to them, and as the survivors covetousness expects their death with impatience, whose life withholds him from falling on the prey. The same man, we may observe, whose greedyness of gain emboldened him to seize it without fear of infection, is wonderfully apprehensive of it, when he should pay any offices of courtesy or charity to his languishing or dying friend; whose obsequies, forsooth, 'tis dangerous to attend, though not at all so, to seize and take possession of his goods; from all which one would be tempted to suspect that the sick was deserted, lest he should have recovered by the administration of seasonable and proper help to him: For it is no uncharitable surmise, that he who is so very ready to enter upon the estate of his departed friend, could not be very unwilling to have him die.

§. 6.
That complaints are unjust which are formed upon these calamities, when the terror of them hath no influence on the lives of the complainants.

6. None of these calamities which are so much complained of, have yet proved sufficient to work a reformation; and whatsoever be the havock which death makes amongst you, none of you seem to consider your mortality. Nothing is so observable as your general running after gain, your seizing and invading property. You do not dissemble your purpose, but proceed in it openly and avowedly; as if it were not *lawful* only, but a *duty* too; as if a man were not barely *permitted*, but *obliged* to do it; and he were wanting to himself if he did not bear his part in it! So bare-faced and universal is this shameless practice! Thieves and robbers have some reserve upon them in their wickedness; they resort to by-ways and deserts for a cover and shelter, and hope the darkness will cover, and the night conceal them. But covetousness hath no such modesty, it makes its inroads in the open day, appears under the very nose of the magistrate, and is not afraid of pushing its pretensions in the face of our courts. Forgeries of writings, poysons, and murders in the open street are hence so frequent, and men are emboldened to engage in these villanies, from the secure prospect they have of committing them with impunity. Thus the wicked commit their several crimes with safety, whilst there are none to be found who are innocent enough to prosecute or avenge them: So that no man is afraid either of an accuser or a judge, but offenders go scot-free, whilst modest men care not, and accomplices are afraid, to meddle; and if they did, it would be to no purpose, whilst the judges are mercenary, and may be bought off: Wherefore this whole matter is well set forth by the Spirit of God, and by the mouth of his prophet; who tells us, that God, if he pleased, could prevent calamities; but that he *doth* not hinder them, sin is the cause: *Is the hand of the Lord* (saith he) *shortned, that it cannot save; or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear?* No! *But your iniquities separate between you and your God, and your sins hide his face from you, that he will not hear.* So that you should consider your sins and your iniquities, you should search the wounds of your consciences; and then you would no longer complain either of God, or of us, when you should find, that you suffer no more than you have deserved.

Isai. 59. 1, 2.

§. 7.
That it is the height of impiety not only to neglect the worship of God, but to hinder others from paying it.

7. Our greatest quarrel with you is, that you vent your rage and fury upon the innocent, and to the great dishonour of God, you vex and persecute his faithful servants. It is a small matter, it seems, with you, to corrupt your

[It is that no man is afraid.] Here our author borrows a little from himself, and from what he had written before in his book [to Donatus of the grace of God,] where he satyrizes to much the same purpose, and in almost the same words, upon the corruptions of heathen practice. [Of the m.] Viz. of the Christians. For it is to be remember'd, that the calamities which the world at that time laboured under, were imputed to Christians, and to their neglect of the established religion.

lives

lives and manners with all the varieties and kinds of wickedness which can be thought of; to subvert the great ends of all true religion by your superstitious practices; to drop all regard and reverence for the majesty of the supreme being; but you must add, besides, to all this load of guilt, the farther aggravation of oppressing those who are devoted to his service, and would give him the glory due unto his name. Is it not enough that you do not, in your own person, worship the true God? Wherefore must you needs be so hard upon those who do? You neither will do it your self, nor suffer it to be done by others. Not only they who worship dumb idols, and images made by the hands of man; but even they who pay their religious addresses to monsters, to things which have no resemblance to them in nature, it seems, can please you; only the worshipper of the true God is peculiarly unfortunate, and can find no acceptance with you. Your temples and altars are kept always warm and smoaking with your sacrifices; and yet the true God hath^b no altars but what we are forced to conceal. Crocodiles, andⁱ apes, and stones, and serpents have religious worship paid to them; whilst the true God can have none, or however none with safety to the persons of the worshippers. You banish, you fine, you throw into chains and prisons; fire and sword, and wild beasts execute your vengeance, upon men who are innocent, and upright, and favourites of heaven: Nor are you pleased to put us presently out of our pain, or to dispatch us speedily; but you invent for us lingering torments, you multiply upon us various instruments of cruelty, and try them upon our bowels; nor is your rage contented with accustomed or common punishments, but you wreck your wits to find out such as are new, and as yet unheard-of.

A. D. 253

8. What savage rage, what cruelty of disposition, and appetite to torment us, is this; whereof your practice towards us makes a discovery! Take which part you please of the following dilemma, and try if you can justify it. It is either a crime, or no crime to be a christian: If it be a crime, why do you not forthwith dispatch the man who pleads guilty to the charge! If it be no crime, why do you pursue the innocent with vexatious prosecutions! If I denied your charge; then, indeed, you might legally and fairly put me to the torture: If I endeavoured to conceal the crime, whereof you accuse me, by trick and doubling; if I declined owning what I am; if I did not plainly and clearly acknowledge that I am no worshipper of your Gods, you would then have a fair occasion of applying the rack to me, and of squeezing the truth out of me by the force of torments. This is the common process in other cases, where the person accused will not confess the crime laid to him; it is then extorted from him by this way, and pain is made to wrench those lips asunder which he would not open voluntarily. But now when I come in of my own accord, when I tell you over and over again, in the clearest and plainest manner, that I am a christian; you have my confession without the torture, and therefore can with no colour of justice expose me to it. I not only deny, but I even do my utmost to demolish your fictitious deities; and that not in a corner, not in privacy nor in solitude, where there are no witnesses to attest my doing so; but openly, avowedly, in places of the greatest resort, even in your courts of judicature, and in the presence of your magistrates and judges; so that how small soever my offence might otherwise, or in *it self* be, yet in the *manner* of my committing it, there is^k aggravation enough to enflame both your resentment and

§. 8.

That 'tis a
against all rule
and reason to
put those to
the torture
who confess
the charge laid
against them.

^b No altars, but what we are forced to conceal.] So then our author did not deny, but that the true God had his altars, though they could not be safely owned.

ⁱ Apes.] The *Cynocephalis* was a beast like an ape, only it had an head and face (as its name imports) like a dog's. These were Egyptian monsters, and objects of that superstitious countrey's worship. But yet as bishop Fell hath observed from *Tertullian* in *Apol.* ch. 6. though *Piso* and *Gabinus* once prohibited their admission into the capitol, they afterwards got an entrance, and had the highest honours paid them by the Romans.

^k Aggravation enough to enflame, &c.] This is still meant to the same purpose, with the title of the §. and with the foregoing parts of it, viz. to shew the unreasonableness of putting christians to the torture,

who

A. D. 253. *my own* punishment. You have abundant witnesses of my confessing your charge against me: I own my self a christian before thousands of you; and by such acknowledgment, I reject, and as far as in me lies, I overthrow your gods, and the whole scheme of your worship and religion: whilst I am therefore thus frank and open, why are you so mean and so ungenerous, as to make your attack upon my weakest part, and to begin your dispute with the frailties of my flesh! Turn your arms, for shame, against a fitter enemy; try your skill upon my mind, my soul, my reasoning powers; see if you can make any impressions there, or gain the least advantage over my faith.

§. 9. *That the gods of the Gentiles, if they have any power, should vindicate themselves, and it; and not yield, as they manifestly do, to christian exorcists.* 9. Or if your gods have really any power, let them exert it in their own defence, and vindicate with it their injured honour. If they do not this, the construction will be, that they, who cannot avenge themselves upon such as *refuse* them worship, will be able to do nothing *for* such as *pay* it them. Or if the *vindicator* be agreed to be more considerable than the party *vindicated*, then are you more considerable than the gods you worship; and if you are really so, instead of your worshipping them, they ought rather to worship you, and to pay you the observances due to a lord and governor. Now this is the plain truth of the case; when they are injured or affronted, you step in to their assistance and rescue; in like manner as your care preserves them in their temples, from the ruinous effects of time, and of various accidents. And are you not now ashamed, to make them the objects of your worship, whose very subsistence is owing to your defence and care of them; or to expect *receiving* protection from them, to whom you are forced to *give* it? I wish you could hear or see them howling and lamenting, and confessing their apprehensions of a future judgment, when we adjure and torment them, throw them into terrors and agonies, and force them out of human bodies, which ¹ they have got possessed of; and all thro' the *ministry* of man, tho' indeed by the *power* of God. Come, and let your own senses judge for you, of the truth I am now asserting. And since you will needs persist in the worship of your Gods notwithstanding all which can be said against it; I am content you should take even *their* word for it; and surely to the evidence *they* shall give in this cause, you can have no exception; or if you would rather trust your own senses in it, you may hear the *demon* your self, who hath now possessed your heart, and blinded your understanding with a midnight darkness, (you may hear him, I say) attesting the truth of what I have now delivered; and thus may observe, that they to whom *you* make your supplications are, themselves, *our* supplicants; that they whom *you* fear and worship, stand, themselves, in the utmost fear and dread of *christians*. You may observe, I say, them, for whom you have such honour and veneration, and whom you consider as *your* lords and governors, lying bound at *our* feet, quaking and trembling like the most abject and submissive captives. Certainly this must convince you of your error, and confound you beyond all reply; to see and hear your gods, answering at our pleasure to the questions we put to them; unable any longer to carry on their tricks without a discovery; and forced to confess, even before your faces, who and what they are, when we demand it of them.

who voluntarily confessed the utmost which could be laid to their charge, and even aggravated the charge it self, by the bold manner of their pleading guilty to it. So that their adversaries ought to have inflicted the penalties, which the law had denounced against their crime, directly and immediately, without farther *apparatus*, or any previous torture; which was only intended to force a confession; and that confession was in this case made, abundantly and fully without the torture.

¹ *They have got possessed of.* As to the truth of those exorcisms, which are reported of the primitive christians, this appeal is alone a strong argument in favour of it. It had been the highest presumption as well as the greatest absurdity in our author, to have spoken thus confidently of it, if he had not been sure of his point; and sure also that others, upon the experiment, must, as well as himself, be convinced of it. See note on §. 4. of the tract to *Donatus*. And as this whole process was miraculous, it is farther hence observable, that miracles were not as yet entirely ceased in the christian church. *Tertullian* in apol. c. 23. made the same bold appeal, and laid his life upon it, that by the power of the christian exorcists, those impure spirits, which had gotten possession of human bodies, should be thence expelled, and forced to confess themselves very devils.

10. What stupidity therefore is it, and blindness of heart, to reject the overtures made for bringing you out of darkness into light? What madness for those who are entangled in the chains of *eternal death*, to refuse the offers of *eternal life*? To hear, without concern, those menaces of God, saying; *He who sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.* And again; *They worship that which their own fingers have made; and the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself; therefore will I not forgive them.* Wherefore then do you bow down and humble your self to false gods? Why do you slavishly bend your body in honour to silly images, and the work of mens hands? God hath made you upright; to other animals he hath given indeed a different shape and figure, and made them to look downwards upon the earth; but your posture was formed erect, and your countenance designed for looking up to God. To him therefore look up, as you were made to do; seek to him in his holy habitation, which is in the highest heavens. That you may avoid the damnation of hell, lift up your heart and your thoughts to heaven. Wherefore should you lie groveling upon the ground, in the way to ruin, with the serpent which first beguiled you? Why will you accompany the devil in his destruction, and be content to fall *with* him, and *by* him? Why should you not rather preserve your self upright, as God hath made you; and let your mind resemble the posture and figure assigned to your body? Know first your self, and consider the just dignity of your being, that thence you may acquaint your self with God, and pay him his proper honours. Forsake those idols, which owe their original to human art and invention. Turn unto the true God, who will hear and help you, whenever you humbly ask it of him. Believe in Christ, the Son of God, sent by his Father to repair our breaches, and to make us alive unto him! Desist from your injurious persecutions of those, who profess themselves the servants of God and Christ, and whose cause will one day be avenged by them: This apprehension is indeed the reason, why we never make any resistance, when your officers take us into custody; and tho' our numbers are great, and we are consequently able to make our adversaries very sensible of our resentments; yet we bear all your violence and injustice, without the least return to it.

A. D. 253.
§. 10.
That 'tis the height of madness to worship idols; and provoke the living God.
Exod. 22. 20.
Isai. 2. 8, 9.

11. It is indeed our entire dependence upon the providence of God, that he will own and avenge our cause; which encourages us to bear with patience the most injurious treatment. Upon this foundation good men are content to yield to wicked; and they who are guiltless of any crime, acquiesce in punishments and torments, upon an assurance that whatever they suffer, shall have in due time its proper vindication; and that the more unjust or grievous their adversaries usage of them shall be, such in proportion will be the vengeance taken for it. And indeed an instance can scarce be named, wherein the men of our persuasion have suffered, from the malice and cruelty of their enemies, but that at the same time the justice of God hath visibly attended, and repaid the oppressor. To say nothing of examples long since past, wherein the vengeance of God hath appeared on the behalf of his faithful worshippers; we have an instance fresh in memory, of a great and sudden relief vouchsafed us, by the utter ruin of those princes, who shewed themselves so much our ene-

§. 11.
That christians bear with the injustice of their persecutors, because they are secure that God will avenge their quarrel.

[Posture was formed erect.] So the heathen poet long before had observed,

*Pronaque cum spectans animalia cetera terram;
Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tuâri
Jussit, & erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*

Ovid. Metamorph. lib. 1. v. 84, &c.

[Never make any resistance.] Observe here the entire dependence of the primitive christians upon the providence of God, without resorting to illegal methods for their own vindication. They would not defend even their religion itself by force of arms, against the laws of their country; tho' we may well presume their religion as dear to them, as it can be to any of its modern patrons.

[Of those Princes.] Viz. the Decii, father Emperor, and son Caesar, whose death our author imputes to the vengeance of God upon them, for their injurious and cruel treatment of christians. See what is written by way of introduction, to the case of the lapsed.

D d d

mies,

A. D. 253. mics, and by the mighty loss at that time sustained of soldiery, treasure, and all sorts of military provisions. And let no one think, that this was an event which happened by chance, or in the common course of things, since it is so expressly said in holy scripture; *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.* And again the Holy Ghost hath cautioned us to the following purpose; *Say not thou, I will avenge me of mine enemy; but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee.* From all which it is evident, that the mischiefs complained of, and supposed very justly to proceed from the wrath of the offended deity, come not upon mankind through any fault of ours, but are really designed for our defence and vindication.

§. 12. And let it be no objection to the preceding remark, that *christians* have, themselves, some share of those calamities which I have asserted to come upon the world for *their* vindication; for the afflictions of this life are grievous and terrible to those chiefly, who have no prospect of happiness or of enjoyment out of it. Well may he lament and mourn for those pressures and distresses which he suffers *here*, who hath no resources of comfort *hereafter*; whose greatest views and designs from life must be here, or no where, answered; who reckons much upon the little felicities wherewith this short and mutable state of things can furnish him, and hath no expectation but of pain and punishment beyond it. Whereas they feel not the forest sting of present evils, who have the assurance of a recompence for them in future good: Wherefore adversity hath no power over us to break or discontent our spirits; nor doth any misfortune, incident either to our estates or bodies, make us murmurers; but, as we profess to live rather by the spirit than the flesh, we get over the weakness of our bodies by the strength and firmness of our minds: We know and are sure, that the events which are most afflictive and grievous to *you*, are designed to approve and fortify *our* virtues; and can *you* then imagine, that *we* are equally sufferers with *you* in any common calamity, when yet *you* and *we* are so very unequally prepared to bear it? *Now*, upon every such occasion, are impatient and loud complainants; *we* ever acquiesce in it with a religious fortitude, and with a becoming sense of the hand which sends it: Nor do we, indeed, expect any thing of happiness, or comfort, in this life; but preparing our selves to weather the storms of it, in the best manner we can, we wait with patience and calmness for the blessed hour, when God shall make good his precious promises concerning us: For whilst we continue in *chaste* bodies, we pretend not to any exemption from the common fate of things; nor is this, we know, the place of distinction for mankind, or of separation between the good and evil; for *that* we must wait the opening of another scene: Mean while, as the righteous and the wicked live all together in one common habitation, whatever happens within the walls of it, all must be content promiscuously to take their share in; till upon the conclusion of this temporal and fleeting life we are parted into separate mansions of everlasting destruction, or of life immortal. 'Tis a mistake, therefore, to say that *we* are upon unequal foot with *you*; only because, whilst *we* are clothed with the same bodies, and live in the same world with *you*, we are liable to the same common inconveniences; for since whatever is truly grievous in any calamity, arises from that uneasy sense of it, wherewith the parties under it do severally receive it; 'tis plain, that the punishment affects not us and *you* equally, because our sense of it is apparently very different from yours. Our hope and faith are in their bloom and vigour, and even the ruins of the world would not sink our courage, or

§. 12.
That the evils
which befall in
common, the
faithful and
the unbeliev-
ing, are much
more heavy
upon the un-
believing.

11. 2.
-fide and
dior used and
to sufficiency
-molesting
-quand, pro-
-it was past
-of and
-ignora illu
-torum modis

P Till upon the conclusion, &c.] See note on §. 2. of the plague, [loth to go to Christ.]

1. 4. Both the ruins of the world.] So Horace
Jupiteris Tenentem propositi virum
Non spem videtur pro a solentem
Non vultu: infans: tyranni
Impavidum ferient ruina, Horat. Carm. 3. od. 3.

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depress our virtue; we repose our selves ever with chearfulness and patience on God's good providence, and are secure of his favourable protection in all events; according to the encouragement which the Holy Ghost hath given to our faith, where he hath said by the mouth of his prophet; *The fig-tree shall bear no fruit, neither shall the vine shoot forth her blossoms; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* He intimates, that the man of God, the true worshipper of him, hath the foundations of his faith and hope so firmly settled, that no storms nor tempests of the world can shake them: Though the vine and the olive should fail, and the field be barren for want of moisture to fatten it; yet all this were nothing to christians, to the servants of the most high God, who are lured by better expectations, by prospects of paradise, and of all the joys which the kingdom of heaven can exhibit to them. They do therefore rejoice in the Lord, and do joy in the God of their salvation; and so bear with patience and courage the worst which can befall them, in sure and certain hope of the many felicities which hereafter wait them: For we who have disclaimed our first birth, and are regenerate and created a-new by the spirit of God, do profess to live to him, and not to the world; we do not indeed expect to partake of his rewards and promises, till we go hence to him: but yet, for deliverance from our enemies, for obtaining rain when it is most necessary, for the removal or mitigation of any temporal calamities; for these, and such like mercies, we apprehend our selves warranted to make continual intercession at the throne of grace: And thus we cease not day and night, endeavouring to obtain for you the favour of God, and to appease his anger; to solicit your forgiveness, and to forward your salvation.

13. Upon the whole, therefore, it should be no encouragement to any of you to believe, that the judgments of God are not pointed at you; merely because the common condition of your, and our nature, makes a participation of its common burdens necessary, as well to us who are his faithful servants, as to you who are his professed and open enemies. For indeed it hath already been foretold by God himself, and by his prophets, that his wrath should overtake the unrighteous; that we ('tis true) should have our share of persecutions and afflictions, which would be grievous to flesh and blood; but yet that they who should bring them upon us, would be sure to suffer for their outrages against us. Great are the things which the providence of God doth for us in the interim; some specimen he gives at present of his exemplary vengeance against our enemies; but the day of judgment is yet to come, of which we have in holy writ the following mention: *Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand, it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. And again; Behold the day of the Lord cometh which shall burn as an oven, and all those who are strangers to him, yea, and all who do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day which cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord.* Where observe what the Lord hath said, viz. That such as are strangers to him shall be burnt up. Now by *strangers* here are meant, such as are aliens and foreigners from all alliance with heaven; such as are not regenerate, nor become from thence the children of God: For that those only can escape who are so regenerate, and marked with the signature of Christ, God hath declared in another place, where

Habak. 3. 17.
18.

§. 13.
That the day of judgment is yet behind, which hath much sorer punishments in reserve.

Isai. 13. 6, 9.

Malac. 4. 1.

[Rain when it is most necessary.] In the mention of obtaining rain, and deliverance from enemies, our author probably alludes to that memorable instance of the success of the christians prayers, which both Justin Martyr and Tertullian have recorded, when at a time of great distress and drought, the legion of christians under the Emperor Aurelius Antoninus, obtained by their prayers a shower of rain, which refreshed the whole army, and made them successful against their enemies.

[Marked with the signature of the cross.] See note on §. 16. 2^d book of testimonies. §. 15. of the unity of the church, and §. 2. of the case of the lapsed; where the sign of the cross in baptism is more parti-

A. D. 253. where he is represented as sending his angels to destroy the world, and to root out from it the whole race of mankind, and accordingly venting his menaces in the following terms; *Go, and smite; let not your eyes spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young; both maids, women, and little children; but touch not any upon whom is the mark.* Now what mark is here meant, and upon what part of the body it is made, we may find from the context of the preceding passage, where we have mention of it; *Go* (saith God) *thro' the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh, and who cry, for all the abominations which are done in the midst thereof.* And again, that this mark bears some allusion to the passion and blood of Christ, and that he is to be saved who shall be found with it upon him, we have farther evidence from the same authority, which hath thus directed; *The blood shall be to you for a (mark or) token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.* What was only typical in the lamb slain, is now fulfilled in Christ, its antitype. There, as in the case of *Egypt* smitten, the *Jews* could not escape, but by the sign given, and by the blood of the lamb upon their doors; so when desolation shall come upon the world, and its inhabitants be smitten in its great catastrophe; upon whomsoever the mark of Christ shall be found, and the tokens of his blood, that person, and only such as he, shall be saved.

§. 14.
The only remedy in this case left is repentance.

14. Repent ye, therefore, whilst ye have the opportunity, and lay hold of eternal life; and as the world is now near its end, let the fear of God prevail with you to turn to him. Account it not a pleasure to domineer and to rule imperiously over just and harmless persons in this world; but remember, that in the finest wheat, there will be a mixture of noxious, or worthless weeds. Suggest not, that evils befall you, because we do not worship your gods; but be assured, that this is the process of God's wrath, to search with his judgments those, whom his mercies cannot gain upon. Seek ye therefore after God, tho' it be late; who hath long ago thus exhorted you by his prophet, saying; *Seek ye the Lord, and your soul shall live;* acquaint your selves with God, how long soever you have neglected him; and bear in mind those words of Christ, wherein he hath declared; *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* Believe him, who cannot deceive; who hath foretold, that all these things shall happen. Believe him, who will assign to believers the recompence of eternal life; who will inflict on unbelievers the everlasting punishment of hell fire. When the day of judgment cometh, how great will then be the glory of our faith, and how astonishing the terror of your infidelity! How will the hearts of believers overflow with joy; and the breasts of unbelievers be filled with sorrow! To consider that here they would not believe, when they will hereafter have no opportunity of returning hither, to be put upon the trial whether they will believe or no! The flames of that devouring fire, which never shall be quenched, will punish with endless torments those who are adjudged to them; nor will their sufferings have the least allay from any hope or prospect, that time will finish or abate them. Their souls and bodies shall be preserved to make each other completely miserable. There the men, to whom we were here for a while the spectacles of reproach

particularly explained. Here the attentive reader will need no other explication, than what our author's words will naturally give him without a comment. Only he may here be reminded of our author's taking it for granted, that the only (federal) way of salvation, the only assurance which could be had of it, was, by entering upon the christian profession; and he plainly supposes the sign of the cross a constant attendant upon that initiation.

[The world near its end.] See note on §. 6. of the vanity of idols, §. 14. of the unity of the church, and §. 19. of the plague.

[Noxious or worthless weeds.] Infelix lolium & steriles dominantur avena.

Virgil. Georgica lib. 1. lin. 154.

and contempt, will be so to us for ever; and the little pleasure they took in feeding their eyes for a few moments with our misery, will be requited to them, by a reverse of the scene, and by being, themselves, a gazing-stock to all generations. For thus the holy scripture hath declared concerning them; *Their worm shall not dye, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be "a spectacle to all flesh.* And again; *Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all they looked for. And they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves; This was he whom we sometimes had in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbred among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints! Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the Sun of righteousness hath not rose upon us. We wearied our selves in the way of wickedness and destruction; yea, we have gone thro' deserts, where there lay no way; but as for the way of the Lord we have not known it. What hath pride profited us? Or what good hath the vaunting of our riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. The sorrow then conceived from their sufferings, will not be of that godly sort which worketh repentance unto salvation; but their grief will continue for ever fruitless, and their deprecation of vengeance utterly ineffectual. Too late will they begin to believe an eternal punishment, who would not in time believe an eternal life. Wherefore make, whilst you may, a careful provision for your life and safety.*

15. We offer you the best and most valuable present which we are able to make you, when we thus advise and persuade you. And because we are forbidden to hate you, and have good reason to think we please our Lord and Master, when we attempt no return of evil for evil; therefore we beseech and exhort you, whilst you have the opportunity, whilst you are on this side the grave, and the world hath yet any time remaining to it, that you would labour to appease the wrath of God, and to make your escape from the gross darkness of superstition, into the pure and heavenly light of true religion. You see we envy none of your advantages, nor do we endeavour to conceal the mercies of God from you. We return you good for evil; and requite the torments and punishments wherewith you have loaded us, with directing you to the way of happiness and salvation. Wherefore, once more, believe, and live; we invite, we beseech you, who at present are our persecutors, to rejoice with us for ever.

16. Upon our removal hence there will be no place for repentance, nor any possibility of atoning for our sins by penitential satisfactions. Here, or no where, must be laid the foundation of eternal life. Here, or no where, must our worship of the true God, and the effects of our believing on him, secure us an interest in the kingdom of heaven. Nor let any one be discouraged by the sinfulness of his past life, or by the shortness of the time which remains to him in it, from beginning his endeavours after the attainment of

A. D. 253.

Isai. 66. 24.

Wisd. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

§. 15.

That we can give our enemies no better proof of our charity, than by exhorting them to repent.

* §. 16.

That after this life, there will be no room for repentance.

* A spectacle.] *Et igitur* say the LXX; and our author: We read it an abhorring; I suppose, a spectacle of abhorrence, will reconcile the difference, and answer both readings.

* §. 16.] See note on §. 2. of the plague, [lost to go to Christ.] The first lines of this §. are strong against the notion of any purgatory fires. See also note on §. 14. of the case of the lapsed, [whilst he is yet in the land of the living.]

† Penitential satisfactions.] See in what sense they are called so; in note on §. 10. of the case of the lapsed, [so satisfy;] and *ibid.* §. 11. note [humiliation.]

‡ The effects of our believing.] *Viz.* Good works, the fruits of the Spirit.

A. D. 253. falvation. There is^a no repentance too late for you, whilst you continue upon the present scene. The door of God's mercy stands always open, and access to the truth is ever easy to such as diligently seek it here: Even in your last moments of life apply to God for the pardon of your sins; even then acknowledge him, who only hath immortality; with an unfeigned faith; and your confession will secure your forgiveness: His never-failing compassions will expunge the guilt of each true believer; and so from the midst of the valley of the shadow of death, will open him a passage to life and immortality. This advantage we derive from the gracious undertaking of Christ our Lord; this is the peculiar triumph of his cross, on which, he hath purchased to himself, by the price of his blood, those who shall believe in him; hath reconciled mankind unto God the Father, and quickened us again by a spiritual and second birth. To him therefore (if it be possible) let every one of us faithfully adhere, and closely follow him; let us all be found upon his roll, and marked with^b his signature; he points to us the path of life, he restores us to paradise, and will at length bring us to the kingdom of heaven; where we shall live for ever with him, being made, through his means, the children of God; with him we shall rejoice eternally, re-instated in all the privileges we had forfeited, through the merits of his all-atoning blood. We christians shall be partakers with Christ in his glory, happy in having God for our Father, in whose presence we shall reap unspeakable everlasting joy, and shall offer him thanks and praise continually: For 'tis, indeed, impossible he should ever cease from either, who from a state of misery and mortality is translated to the regions of a never-dying, never-fading bliss.

^a No repentance too late.] Our author is here, we must remember, addressing to heathens, and not to christians; and therefore must be understood to mean *baptismal repentance*, which was always thought to carry with it the remission of all sins committed before it in heathen life. But here is not the least indulgence supposed or granted, to christians living in a state of sin, and repenting in the last moments of life; nor is it said of *their* repentance, that it can never be too late: On the contrary we shall find our author declaring against the grant of penance to such sick-bed penitents as then first sued for it. See 55. ep. §. 13. N. B. This notion of all sins being forgiven by baptism, was the occasion of a very bad practice in after-times, viz. of deferring baptism to a death-bed.

^b His signature.] viz. The sign of the cross in baptism, for which see the places referred to in §. 13. of this tract. Note [signature of the cross.]

^c Restores us to paradise, and will at length bring us.] At their deaths good men were supposed to go to paradise, from which Adam, by transgression, fell; and at the day of judgment their bliss was to be completed, in a different and higher station; then, and not till then, they were advanced to heaven. See notes on §. 2 and 10. of the case of the lapsed. [Loth to go to Christ, and place of refreshment.]





Of ALMS and good WORKS.

The tract of alms and good works is judged, by our right reverend annalist and editor, to have been written in the year 254, soon after the two persecutions, which followed so close upon each other; and our author in the body of it, doth more than once allude to the comparative excellences of suffering in a time of persecution, and of alms-giving, in a season exempt from it; which two cases he represents as of a value well-nigh equal: But it should seem, indeed, to have been written before the invasion upon the poor Numidians by the Barbarians; since if that case had then been known, our author could scarce have avoided the mention of it in such a work as this. It happened, however, very providentially, if it were written somewhat before that great calamity; since the christians of that country were so well prepared by it, for exerting their liberality upon so sad an occasion; which the reader may find distinctly mentioned in epist. 62. There will, it must be confessed, a difficulty arise upon placing this treatise with our annalist and editor in the year 254, and yet supposing with one of them, (viz. the editor) that it was written before the Numidian invasion, which our very learned annalist hath assigned to the year 253. Wherefore we must either conclude, that it was written after that invasion, and intended to stir up the minds of christians to a liberal contribution upon that exigence (but then it will be strange that only general topicks should be insisted on, and the special occasion never named) or else we must place it in the year 253; which I rather incline to do, because such an assignment of it will clear up the forementioned difficulty; though it runs me upon one almost as great, viz. of leaving two such great names behind me as bishop Fell's and bishop Pearson's.



RE AT and manifold are the mercies of God towards us, my beloved brethren, in which both God the Father, and Christ his Son, have from the beginning co-operated, and are still evermore co-operating to our salvation; accordingly the Father hath sent his Son to save and quicken us, and to repair the ruines of our nature; the Son on his part condescended willingly to be sent upon this employment, and chose to be called the son of man, that he might thereby make us the sons of God: He humbled himself that he might raise such as were fallen; he was wounded that he might heal our wounds; he became as a servant, that he might deliver us from bondage, and procure our liberty; he was content to die, that our mortal might put on immortality. These are blessings of mighty consequence, and we owe them entirely to the divine compassions; but the care of a gracious providence is yet farther extended towards us, and a fuller provision (we find) is made for securing to man the effects of his redemption, and of Christ's undertaking for them. Thus, when our blessed Lord came into the world, and healed thereby the breaches made in it by our first parent's transgression, and furnished us with an antidote against the

That it ought to be esteemed among the principal favours of providence to us, that we have it in our power to do good to others.

^a Our first parent's transgression.] Our author was, we see, no stranger to the doctrine of original sin, nor to the imputation of Adam's guilt upon succeeding generations. His posterity wanted a cure of it, and found it, if we will believe our author, in Christ's undertaking.

A. D. 253. poyson of the old serpent; he gave this direction, to the parties whom he
 John 5. 14. had *made whole*, that they should *sin no more, lest a worse thing should
 come unto them*. The law of innocence had indeed reduced us to grievous
 straits, and we knew not well upon that foot which way to turn us, with
 the infirmities of our nature cleaving so closely to us. Here, therefore, the
 compassions of God stepped in to our relief, shewed us a way of maintaining
 and preserving the salvation wrought for us, by acts of justice and charity;
 and of ^b expunging any guilt we might afterwards contract, by *alms and good
 works*. The Holy Ghost hath told us, by the mouth of an inspired writer;
 Prov. 15. 27. That ^c *by faith and good works, sins are purged away*; ^d by which however
 are not meant the sins committed before baptism; for they are purged away
 by the blood of Christ, and by the merit of his righteousness. Again we find
 Eccles 3. 30. it asserted by the ^e same authority; That *as water will quench a flaming
 fire, so alms will blot out the guilt of sin*. Here it is clearly and strongly
 suggested, that as the sacred laver of regeneration hath a power to quench
 the flames of hell, so by works of charity and mercy, the cry of vengeance
 against our sins is silenced. And because our sins can but once be remitted in
 the ordinance of baptism, therefore assiduity and constancy in acts of righte-
 ousness and mercy, supply the place of it, and assist in restoring us again to
 the favour of God. Our Lord hath taught us thus much in his gospel; for
 when his disciples were censured for eating with unwashen hands, he an-
 swered and said; *He who made that which is within, made also that which
 is without: But rather give alms of such things as you have, and behold
 all things are clean unto you*; in which words he hath well admonished us,
 Luke 11. 40. to take more care of purifying our hearts, than our hands; and of cleansing
 our inside, rather than our outside; and hath taught us moreover, that who-
 ever hath done the former, needs not to be solicitous about the latter; and
 when the mind is once rectified, that the body will never be judged polluted.
 He hath also hinted to us, what it is which thus cleanses us; and hath inti-
 mated, that works of charity are requisite in order to it. The most merciful
 person whom the world ever saw in it, hath recommended mercy to us; and
 from his abundant desire to perfect the salvation of those, whom he hath re-
 deemed at so great a price; he hath shewed them a way to be cleansed again,
 when they have contracted new defilements after their baptismal purification.
 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us be persuaded to acknowledge the
 merciful purposes of God concerning us, and the helps he hath given us for
 purging our consciences, and for working out our salvation: And since 'tis
 impossible for us to preserve our selves free from some guilt or other, let us
 resort to those wholesome medicines for a cure of it, which Christ hath prescri-
 bed to us in his gospel.

2. Nor let any one so insist upon his innocence, or so flatter himself, that
 his conscience is unpolluted, as to neglect the application of a proper balsam

That no man
 can justify in-
 sist on his in-
 nocence, since
 all stand in
 need of the
 mercies of God.

^b Expunging guilt by alms.] This was one of Origen's seven ways before alluded to, whereby re-
 mission of sins was heretofore thought attainable. See Origen, in *Levit.* ch. 3. quoted in note on §. 1.
 of the 3^d book of *Testimonies*, [*Alms make an atonement*.]

^c By faith and good works.] These words are not found in the *Hebrew*, and therefore our version
 takes no notice of them. But the *LXX* and the vulgar *Latin* retain them, as well as our author.
 N. B. In ch. 16. §. 6. the same sense is repeated. And the *Arabic* version speaks home to our au-
 thor's sense.

^d By which however are not meant the sins committed before baptism.] These our author, and all anti-
 quity with him, supposed to be forgiven at the baptism of every christian, wherein the advantages of
 Christ's undertaking were understood to be sealed and applied to the benefit of each partaker in that ho-
 ly ordinance. Our author is therefore cautious, that his reader might not apprehend, he disparaged any
 benefits supposed to arise from thence. He would not that any should think, alms could contribute to
 the forgiveness of such sins, of which baptism alone was instrumental to the pardon; but since after
 baptism, the rule was to sin no more; and since that rule could not have a punctual and exact obser-
 vance; therefore acts of charity, did very commodiously assist, in procuring the pardon of such offen-
 ces as were committed after baptism.

^e Same authority.] Viz. of the Holy Ghost; to which our author clearly ascribes the book of *Eccle-
 siasticus*.

to his wounds; since we find it thus written; *Who can say, I have a clean heart, I am pure from my sin?* And the apostle St. John hath asserted in his epistle, *That if we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.* Now if no man can live without sin, and whoever pretends to be exempt from it, is justly reprehensible either for his pride or folly; how necessary to us all is the divine mercy? How good, how gracious is our God, who, upon a foresight of the blemishes we should contract after our first purification, hath taught us how to cleanse them, and hath beforehand pointed to us a method, for the recovery of any future forfeitures?

3. God hath not been wanting, my beloved brethren, to excite his people, in the scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, to works of mercy; and whomsoever the Holy Ghost hath encouraged to expect an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, he hath at the same time directed to be liberal in almsgiving. We may observe him issuing his orders to *Isaiah*, in manner following; *Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet; and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.* And when he had thus commanded them to be reproached for their sins, and had set their misdeeds before them in the most flaming colours, and had denounced to them, that no prayers howsoever ardent, no fastings howsoever mortifying, no severities they should exercise upon themselves, tho' in sackcloth and ashes, would prove available to their pardon, or appease the wrath of his offended Majesty; yet in the conclusion he subjoined, that *alms* would do for them, what nothing else could obtain; and accordingly we find it written; *Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor, who are cast out, to thine house; when thou seest the naked, cover him; and despise not thine own flesh: Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward: Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.* In which passage, we have a method prescribed to us in God's own words, for appeasing his anger; and what sinners have to do, is expressly taught them in holy scripture, viz. to cancel the debt they have contracted to the divine justice, by works of righteousness, and to purge away their sins by commendable acts of charity and mercy. Thus we are directed by *Solomon*, *To lodge our alms in the heart of the poor, who should effectually pray for our deliverance from all evil.* And again; *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, himself, unto God, and there shall be none to hear him.* For it is very incongruous, and indeed impossible, that he should be entitled to the compassions of God, who hath, himself, no bowels for his neighbour; or that his prayers should obtain any thing from the mercies of God, who shews himself inhuman and uncourteous to the intreaties of man: Which truth is well and strongly inculcated in the book of *psalms*, where we find it written, *Blessed is the man who considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.* The prophet *Daniel* was mindful of these injunctions, when he directed King *Nebuchadnezzar* to seek relief for the anxiety and trouble he was under from his dream, and to derive upon himself the blessing and protection of God, by resorting to this very practice; *Wherefore* (saith he) *let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, redeem thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; and God will then be merciful to thy transgressions.* The King, it seems, would not hearken to him; and so all the mischiefs which he had seen in his dream came

§. 3.
That the holy scriptures are full of exhortations to acts of charity.

Ibid. 7, 8, 9.

Eccles. 29. 12.

Prov. 21. 13.

Psal. 41. 1.

Dan. 4. 27.

First purification.] Viz. by baptism.

Health.] Vestimenta, saith our author; probably by mistaking the LXX's *ἰσχυρία* for *ἰσχυρία*: see this noted in §. 1. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

In the heart.] See what is written in note upon this passage §. 1. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

A. D. 253. upon him; these he might have escaped and avoided, if he had hearkned to the prophet's counsel, and redeemed his sins by shewing mercy to the poor: The angel *Raphael* beareth his testimony to the same advice, and exhorteth to liberality in alms-giving, where he saith; *Prayer is good with fasting and alms; for alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin.* He intimates that our prayers and fastings are less available when they have not the assistance of our alms along with them; that good works contribute largely to the success of any petitions which are offered to the throne of grace. In short, the angel hath clearly and strongly hinted, that every request which is there presented, must owe its efficacy to acts of charity; that these have a power to deliver our souls from death, and to rescue our lives from any impending danger.

§. 4. 4. Nor do we leave the point upon this single issue; but shall farther establish and confirm what the angel *Raphael* hath spoken, by the testimony of truth it self. Upon the credit of what we find written in the acts of the apostles, we may safely believe the fact which is expressly asserted in that history, and may depend upon the truth of it as it is there related, viz. That alms do not only deliver from the second, but from the first death. When *Tabitha* fell sick and died, (a woman full of good works and alms-deeds which she did) *Peter* (we are told) was sent for to her dead body; and when he, with the good nature of an apostle, readily complied with the invitation, and accordingly came, the widows stood round him weeping, and intreating him, and shewing the coats and garments which *Tabitha* had helped them to; and so indeed the works of the deceased pleaded for her more effectually than any application of her friends, on her behalf, could do. *Peter* presently perceived that their petition would be granted, and that Christ would not deny the prayers of the widows, as taking the charity of providing them with garments, to have been done unto himself: *Peter* therefore entered forthwith upon the office, so highly suitable to his character, of interceding for the poor and widows, and of recommending their prayers to our Lord and Saviour; and immediately knelt down (as the process of the history informs us) and prayed; and turning him to the body, which lay washed in an upper story, he said, in the name of Jesus Christ, *Tabitha, arise.* Nor was Christ backward to hear and honour the request of his apostle, who had promised in his gospel, to do whatever should be asked in his name. A reprieve from death was presently granted her, her

By the testimony of truth it self.] This is the first instance of distinction we have met with from our author, between an apocryphal and a canonical writer. Here he makes it professedly, and confirms the one by the testimony of the other. Wherefore 'tis hence evident, that the book of *Tobit* stood not with him in the same degree of esteem with other books, which he accounted written by more immediate inspiration: But then from what hath been observed concerning his manner of citing some other writers who are now held apocryphal, it must be acknowledged, that he seemed to judge them of an higher class: Such as the *Wisdom of Solomon*; *Ecclesiasticus*; &c. See note on §. 3. of the Lord's prayer, [*Baruch and Jeremiah*]; §. 14. of the 2^d book of testimonies, [*Wisdom of Solomon*]; §. 17. of the plague, [*Holy Ghost by the mouth of Solomon*]; §. 5. of the same, [*Holy Scripture*]; §. 20. of the 1st book of testimonies, [*Book of Tobit*]. And above all, §. 20. of the Lord's prayer. Note [*Tobit* 12. 8. holy scripture.] He seems upon the whole to have been of opinion; that amongst the holy books there were degrees of holiness, and a different measure of divine assistance lent to the different writers of those books, which we severally style apocryphal and canonical.

Suitable to his character.] Viz. His character, as an apostle, and a bishop of the church of Christ; whereby he was an authorized intercessor, in the name of Christ, between God and man. Our author seems to have thought, that how willing soever Christ might be to hear the prayers of these widows on the behalf of their deceased friend and benefactress; yet the recommendation of those prayers by *Peter*, whose office and character it was to be their advocate and mediator, would send them up to our Lord with more efficacy and power. See note on §. 14. of the case of the leper, [*Whilst he is yet in the land of the living*, &c.] and ibid. §. 15. [*That I may beseech God for you*] and the following note.

For the poor and widows.] This confirms what hath been observed in the preceding note, viz. That the apostolick episcopal office of *Peter* is here referred to; since in our author's age, the poor and widows of the church entered most particularly into the bishop's care.

Lay washed in an upper story.] The Gentiles (as well as christians) had long been accustomed to this usage of washing dead bodies. To which old *Ennius* refers in that passage; *Turqum corpus bona femina lavit & unxit.* Bp. Fell.

spirit

spirit returned, and, to the admiration and astonishment of all the by-standers, her body was restored to life again; so available with God were acts of charity; such mighty power with him had works of righteousness! She who had so often furnished widows in distress, with the necessaries of life, was thought worthy to have her life restored to her, at the request of those widows whom she had so often relieved.

5. Wherefore our Lord Christ, our great instructor in the ways of righteousness and salvation; he who enlightens and quickens all true believers, and when he hath done so, fain would conduct them to his heavenly kingdom; hath insisted on no command more copiously, hath repeated none more frequently, than this of diligence and perseverance in acts of charity; that we should not attach our selves too closely to our earthly possessions, but should rather lay up for our selves a treasure in heaven. *Sell (saith he) what ye have, and give alms.* And again; *Lay not up for your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for your selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal: For where your treasure is there will your heart be also.* And when he had a mind to represent a pattern of finished and perfect righteousness, he said to a man, who made large professions of having observed the whole law; *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me.* Thus he hath also in another place pronounced, that the merchant who would purchase to himself an interest in the grace of the gospel, and in the salvation thence propounded, must come at this goodly pearl, this life eternal, which cost so great a price as the blood of Christ, by parting with his patrimony, and by selling all he hath to obtain it. *The kingdom of heaven is like (saith he) unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls; who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.* Those likewise whom he observes to be diligent in these kind offices of feeding the hungry, and assisting the poor and needy, he styles the children of Abraham. For when Zuccheus had said, *Behold! the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.* Jesus answered him, *This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.* For if Abraham's believing God was accounted unto him for righteousness, why should not he who gives his alms, in pursuance of a command from God, be accounted to believe in God? Now if so; 'tis pretty certain that he who hath the true faith of God in his heart, hath the fear of him lodged there too; and he who hath the fear of God in his heart, will have it duly affected, with compassion for his needy brethren. He therefore abounds in good works, because he believes in God; because he knows that the word of God is true, that whatsoever he hath foretold will come to pass; and that his holy scriptures cannot lye, which have expressly assured him, that the trees which bear no fruit, i. e. indeed men who are barren in good works, shall be hewen down and cast into the fire; but that the merciful shall be blessed, and entitled to the kingdom of heaven. In another passage he hath likewise denominated such as are fruitful in good works, faithful; and those who are barren and unfruitful, he hath stigmatized as unfaithful; *If (saith he) ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?*

6. But you pretend to object and say, that the more you give, the less will be left to you; that your fortune will suffer by these donations, and by relieving the wants of others, you shall at length come to want your self. Be easy, I beseech you, as to this apprehension, and let it not disquiet you; the purse, you may depend on it, will be never emptied, which discharges it self upon

A. D. 253.

§. 5.

That no command is more insisted on by Christ than this of diligence and perseverance in acts of charity.

Luke 12. 33.
Matt. 6. 19.

20, 21.

Matt. 19. 21.

Matt. 13. 45.

Luke 19. 8, 9.

Rom. 4. 3.

Matt. 3. 10.

Matt. 5. 7.

§. 6.

That the fear of being reduced to want by acts of charity is a groundless apprehension.

- A. D. 253. upon the service of Christ, and ^a provides for the celebration of his heavenly ordinance! Nor do I expect or desire, that you should take my word for this, but I appeal for it to the authority of holy writ; and thence I undertake to make good my promise: The Holy Ghost hath thus spoken by the mouth of Solomon, and said; *He that giveth unto the poor, shall never lack; but he that turneth away his eye, shall be in great distress*; plainly assuring us, that the merciful and the charitable can never want, but quite on the contrary, that the parsimonious and empty-handed are the persons most likely to be so reduced. The holy apostle Paul, who was so full of inspiration from above, hath likewise delivered himself to the following purpose; *He that minisreth seed to the sower, shall both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness, that ye may be enriched in every thing*. And again; *The administration of this service not only supplieth the necessities of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God*. Thus whilst the poor, who are relieved by our alms and charity, return to God their thanksgivings for the comfort they receive from them; our fortune derives an increase from the blessing of providence, repaying mercy with mercy. Our Lord in his gospel hath beforehand met with this objection, and answered it: He foresaw the sentiments of these mens hearts, knew how unapt they would be to believe and trust in him, and hath therefore laid in the following caution for their use and notice; *Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek,) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things; but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*. Observe, how he saith, That all these things shall be added, by way of gift, and, as it were, into the bargain, to such as seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. For our Lord hath promised, that at the day of judgment they shall be admitted into his kingdom, who have been most remarkable in his church for their works of mercy, and labours of love.
- §. 7. You pretend to be apprehensive, that your purse may fail you, if you make too bold with it in acts of charity; but whilst you are so exceedingly solicitous about your fortune, you seem unfortunately to forget, that your life is slipping away from you, that your salvation is at stake; and yet you make no provision that it may not fail you; you are afraid of the least damage which may affect your substance, and all the while are regardless of the mischiefs which threaten your person; so that you have more care of your mammon than you have of your soul; and are, your self, content to become the sacrifice, rather than that your money should. Well, therefore, hath the apostle reminded us, *That we brought nothing into this world, and that it is certain we can carry nothing out*; and that, *having food and raiment, we should be therewith content*: For that they, who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; that the love of money is the root of all evil, which whilst some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and involved themselves in many sorrows. You are afraid, forsooth, of being a loser by the largesses of your charity! Yet when, I beseech you, was it ever known, that the righteous man wanted the necessary accommodations of life? It is written for his encouragement, *That the Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish*: Elijah, we know, was fed by the mini-

[^a Provides for the celebration, &c.] He means the provision of the eucharistical elements by the alms of the people, who always made their oblations when they received the holy eucharist, which our author here calls celebrating the heavenly work. Out of these oblations the poor were provided for, the bishop and his clergy maintained, the edifices belonging to them kept in repair, and they were enabled moreover to be hospitable to strangers, in another guise manner, than any legal establishment now enables them to be.

stry of ravens bringing food to him; and when *Daniel* was shut up in the den of lions by the King's commandment, that he might be devoured by them, a dinner was sent him by God's special appointment: And after all these instances of God's favourable kindness to his servants, is it possible for you to suspect, that he will leave you destitute of necessary sustenance, when you are labouring to please him by works of mercy and compassion? He hath (himself) condescended to debate this point with such as are weak in their faith, and wavering in their minds, and hath, with great justice, reproached them in the following expostulation; *Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they?* Now if God provides for the birds of the air; and even the sparrows want not their daily sustenance; and if creatures, which have no sense of a God or providence, find themselves furnished with the necessities of life; can you imagine, that a christian, one devoted to the service of God, given to good works, and upon all accounts dear to his heavenly Master, will be suffered to want any fit accommodation? That he, who furnishes Christ, in his members, with food and sustenance, will be left by Christ in a condition destitute of *either*? Or that he, who hath *heavenly* things in a plentiful measure given him, will not have a sufficient portion of *earthly* granted him?

A. D. 253.
History of Bell
and Dragon,
p. 35.

Matt. 6. 26.

8. Whence, I beseech you, do these mistrustful thoughts find harbour in your breast? Thoughts, which reflect so much dishonour upon your Maker's bounty, and which rob him of his proper glory? What hath this diffident temper to do in the household of faith? Or how can he pretend to the name of a *christian*, who dares not rely upon the promises of Christ? The name of a *pharisee* is much more suitable to his character! For we may remember, when our Lord in the gospel was discoursing of alms, and advising his disciples, by a prudent dispensation of their earthly treasure, to make themselves friends, who, *when they should fail, might receive them into everlasting habitations*; the sequel of that passage informs us, that *the pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and derided him*. Some men, of like spirit with these, we have now in the church; whose ears are deaf, and hearts are blinded, to a degree which excludes any light or influence from the precepts of the gospel reaching or affecting them: At these we should not wonder, when we observe them treating the *servant* with neglect and contumely; since they offer the *Master* himself no better usage.

§. 8.
That this way
of thinking is
more suitable
to a pharisee
than a christi-
an.

Luke 16. 9.
Ibid. p. 14.

9. Wherefore then do you go on to deceive and abuse your self with that lame excuse, of being with-held from acts of bounty and charity, by the fear of what may befall you in the time to come? Which is so mere a scarecrow, that no considerate man can be ever frightened with it! You might e'en as well confess the plain truth; and, since none of your shams and subtleties will pass upon any person of common sense, speak out the case as it really stands with you, and be no longer upon the reserve or disguise. Your case then is plainly this: Your soul is too *narrow* to make room for charity; too *dark* to endure such a shining light in it; and too *carnal* for the reception of such a *spiritual* guest: You are a very slave and a drudge to your money; you are tyed and bound in the chains of endless desire; and tho' Christ hath once made you free, you throw your self again into a state of bondage: You are saving of that, which cannot save you, when you have saved the most of it; you amass great heaps of it together, which are good for nothing, but to sink you under the unequal burden; but you forget all this while that notable sarcasm of God to the rich man, who was so foolish as to triumph in a vain reflection upon the abundance of his wealth; *Thou fool* (said God to him) *this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* How preposterous therefore is it in you to hug your riches to your self, to add heap to heap, and to punish your self with needless cares and fears; only to be rich to your self, whilst

§. 9.
That covetousness makes
a man more
truly poor,
than any
thing besides.

Luke 12. 20.

A. D. 253. you are poor towards God? Rather let me persuade you to divide your incomes with the Lord your God, to share your profits with Christ your Saviour; to make him partaker with you of your earthly treasures, that you may become joint-heir with him to his heavenly kingdom.

§. 10.
That none are
truly rich but
such as a-
bound in good
works; all o-
thers blind
and miserable.
Revel. 3. 17,
18.

10. You are quite mistaken who fancy your self rich and abounding, from any portion which may be allotted you of this world's treasures. Hear what our Lord hath said in the book of *Revelations* to men in such circumstances, how smartly and justly he reproaches them in the following words; *Thou sayest I am rich, and increase with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.* Do you therefore, who are, in your own opinion, so exceedingly rich and abounding, buy of Christ gold tried in the fire; that by the purging away your dross, and purifying your conscience with charitable actions, you may become like fine gold, which will bear all tests. Buy of him white raiment, to cover the shame of that nakedness and deformity which you derived from *Adam*, and to cloath your self in the pure and unblemished garment of Christ. Do you who are a matron in the church of Christ, anoint your eyes with the eye-salve here recommended by him, and not with that devilish preparation in common use, which disguises the countenance of nature, and substitutes in stead of it an artificial look: Thus whilst you are endeavouring to recommend your self to the favour of God, by the probity of your dispositions, and the charity of your actions, you may be admitted at length to see him; but whilst you proceed in the usual way, you will have no inclination to do any good in the church; your eyes will never see through that artificial darkness wherewith you have encompassed them, so as to look upon the poor and needy, or to relieve them under their several distresses.

§. 11.
That 'tis ut-
terly inexcus-
able to ap-
proach the eu-
charist with-
out making an
oblation at it.

11. Can you who are rich and flourishing in your circumstances, imagine, that you celebrate the holy eucharist as you should do, when you have no regard to the corban; when you come into the church without making your oblation, and scandalously take your part of those provisions to which even the poor communicants have contributed? Consider rather the example of the good widow in the gospel, whose poverty did not make her unmindful of her duty, nor give her any handle of excuse from good works; but notwithstanding the

^p *Pure and unblemished garment.*] *Indumento Christi candido*; which may possibly allude to those white garments (if they were so early in use) which were worn by the new-baptized christians, between *Easter* and *Whitsun-tide*: the latter of which seasons derived thence its name. N. B. All this is our author's paraphrase upon the text last quoted. *Revelat.* 3. 17, 18.

^q *Devilish preparation.*] *Sibio diaboli*. Some antimonial preparation used in our author's time, by the ladies of his country, for disguising their looks and eye-brows, and for giving them a better air. *Tertullian de cult. feminar.* had intitled the devil to this invention, calling him the author of all these artificial disguises, *natura interpelator*. This *sibium* is referred to 2 *Kings* 9. 30. *Jer.* 4. 30. *Ezek.* 23. 40. *Bishop Fell.*

^r *Artificial darkness.*] Here again our author points his satyr against the artifice so much used by those of his age and country, for making their eye-brows black.

§. 11. *That 'tis utterly inexcusable, &c.*] In 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. the apostle hath advised every one on the first day of the week to lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, for the purposes of charity; upon which a practice was very early grafted of depositing what was so laid aside, at the time of solemn worship, in the hands of the bishop; who thence provided the eucharistical elements, and answered other occasions of the church. See note on §. 6. of this tract. [*Provides for the celebration, &c.*] *Justin Martyr* In his 2. *Apol.* hath given some account of this usage as in his time obtaining, and the 5th canon of the council of *Ancyra* hath referred to it, calling the whole sacramental action by the name of oblation; so denominating the whole from so considerable a pars. See note [*celebrate the holy eucharist*] in ep. 5. §. 2.

Holy eucharist.] *Dominicum*; which in the language of the church had three significations, either (1.) the Lord's day, as in *Revel.* 1. 9. and *Ignar. epist. to Trall.* Or (2.) the church it self, the house of God, as our author presently after applies it in this very sentence, and so doth the 5th canon of the council of *Neocaesarea*. Or (3.) as in the passage here quoted, the solemnities of divine worship, and especially the holy eucharist. *Bp. Fell.*

pressures

pressures she lay under, she threw into the treasury two mites, which was her whole estate. When our blessed Lord observed the fervour of her charity; and had taken his estimate of it, not so much from the narrowness of her fortune, as from the greatness of her mind, and had valued not the sum given, but the sum out of which 'twas given, he answered and said; *Of a truth this poor widow hath cast in more than they all; for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living which she had.* A noble testimony this! and happy the woman who had the honour of her judge's applauses and commendations, even before the day of judgment! Let the rich stand hence abash'd and confounded at their bringing forth no fruit, and at their distrust of God's providence; when even a poor destitute widow is observed abounding in acts of mercy. In other cases, usually what is given away, is assigned to the uses of the orphan and the widow; but in this instance a widow was the *giver*, who was entitled to have been the *receiver*; that the *rich* may be hence instructed what punishment is reserved for them, when backward in these offices of charity; since even the *poor* themselves are not exempt from an obligation to discharge them. And that we all may farther be convinced how God accepts these things as done to himself, and how surely they entitle the person doing them to his favour; Christ hath told us in the forementioned passage, that these were God's offerings, and that this widow cast in her two mites unto the offerings of God. From all which the wise man's observation is abundantly manifest, *That he who hath pity upon the poor, lendeth out to the Lord at interest.* A. D. 253. Luke 21. 3, 4.

12. Nor ought it, my beloved brethren, to be any excuse to a christian from works of righteousness and charity, to plead that he hath a family of his own to provide for, and that his children will want his utmost assistance; since whatever we lay out in this way, we should consider, that Christ hath declared himself the receiver of it; and so, tho' there be no obligation upon us to prefer every fellow-christian before our own children, yet we may, and we ought to prefer Christ before them; remembering what he hath said upon this subject in his gospel; *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* We read likewise in the book of *Deuteronomy* what tends to the same purpose of confirming our trust in God, and enlarging our love of him; *He who saith unto his father and mother, I have not known you; and doth not acknowledge his own children* (this is the man who) *hath observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.* For if we really love God with all our hearts, we shall prefer neither father, nor mother, nor children before him. The same truth hath likewise the testimony of St. *John* to it in his epistle, who hath strongly intimated, that the love of God is not in those who will not extend their labour of love to the necessitous and distressed; *Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth that his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* For if, as hath been observed; *He who giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord at interest;* and what is given to the least of his servants, is interpreted as given to Christ himself; there can be no colour of reason for preferring earthly things before heavenly, nor the things of men before those of God. Prov. 19. 17. v. 12. That the care for one's family is no excuse. Matt. 25. 40. Matt. 10. 37. Deut. 33. 9. 1 John 3. 17. Prov. 19. 17. Matt. 10. 37.

13. Thus we read in the first book of *Kings*, concerning a certain widow, who in a time of extreme scarcity and famine, had only a small quantity of flower and oyl left her, and therewith had baked a few cakes of course bread in ashes, which when she had eaten, she had no other view than of dying with her children; this woman the prophet *Elijah* hapned to visit, and to beg that she would give him a morsel of that bread, before she and her children 13. How great is the account which these expences turn to; deduced by instances.

v. 12.] It was our author's business, as an orator recommending his subject, to carry it to its utmost height, and to skrew up the lesson of duty to its sublimest pitch, as knowing well that human nature would sufficiently relax in practice.

should

A.D. 253. should eat the small remainder; she cheerfully complied with his request, and, as tender as she was of her children, in a time of distress and famine, she preferred the wants of the prophet before theirs. Thus she performed an action highly pleasing to God, as it were in his more immediate presence; what was asked of her, she readily granted; she gave not a *little* out of a *great deal*; but out of a *small pittance*, she made an offer of the *whole*; and tho' her children were half-starved, she fed a stranger before them; in the midst of her extreme want and hunger, she thought not so much of supplying her own, as another's necessities; whilst she was busied in an office of charity, she regarded not so much the preservation of her natural life, as the salvation of her immortal soul. *Elijah* therefore, in this a representative of Christ, and exhibiting a specimen of that recompence, which Christ hath allotted to the merciful and compassionate, made her the following return; *Thus saith the Lord, The vessel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruise of oyl fail, until the day wherein the Lord shall send rain upon the earth.* Accordingly the promise of God was made good to her, and she had ample returns for what she thus expended; her righteousness and charity were so well accepted, that her vessel was kept full of meal, and her cruise of oyl. Nor was the mother in the least injurious to her children, by her preference of the prophet before them; but whatever she did for *him* redounded (all of it) to *their* advantage. Yet she was utterly unacquainted with Christ, had never heard of him, or his commandments; she was not excited by any consideration of benefits received from his cross and passion, to deal out her bread to the hungry, or her drink to the thirsty, in requital of the blood he shed for her: From all which views it is abundantly manifest, to what height of aggravation their guilt is raised, who, in the church of Christ, shall be found preferring themselves or their children before their Lord and Master, or hoarding their riches to themselves, when the wants of the poor invite them to a liberal communication of their massive treasure.

1 Kings 17.
14.

§. 14.
That a great
number of
children is re-
ally a motive
to a more ex-
tensive chari-
ty.

Tob. 12. 9.

Job 1. 1, 2, 5.

14. Well! but you still will plead, that you have many children, and that the number of them restrains you from being so forward, as you would otherwise be, to acts of charity: But here you consider not, that your argument turns upon you; that the more the pledges are which you have given to providence, and the more the stakes which you have depending, they do really so much the more oblige you to cultivate an interest with heaven, to recommend your self and your children to its favour, by offices and works of mercy. You have thence the more to ask for, the more sins to atone for, the more consciences to be purified, and the more *souls* to be *delivered from death*. As with regard to the occasions of this present life, the more you have in family to provide for, the greater necessarily will be the expence of that provision; so with regard to the exigencies of your future state, and of your spiritual life, the more you have under your care, and the greater the number is of those whom you are concerned for, the greater proportionably should be your diligence in good works. Thus we find, that holy *Job* offered sacrifices to God for his children according to their number. And as it was impossible that a day should pass, without somewhat committed displeasing to God; *Job* offered up to him daily sacrifices, for the expiation of any guilt which should be so contracted. The holy scripture hath thus related to us his practice, saying; *Job was a man of truth and uprightness, and he had seven sons and three daughters; and he sanctified them, offering burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; * a calf for their sins.* Wherefore if you really

* *More sins to atone for.*] It hath already been observed, that this of almsgiving was considered as one of the seven ways, whereby the remission of sins was attainable. See note on §. 1. of this tract, [*expunging guilt by alms*]; and holy scripture is often cited in this tract, for the support of that opinion.

* *Calf for their sins.*] Thus the LXX and our author add, tho' the Hebrew and vulgar Latin have it not. However the thing is known to have been usual, that expiatory were added to eucharistical sacrifices. Bishop Fell.

love your children, if you have at heart those paternal bowels for them, which this excuse would suggest you to have; you should rather abound, than be slack, in offices of charity, that God may thence be rendered more gracious to you, and to your children. You should not so much consider what their father upon earth can do for them, who is mortal and crazy; but rather engage him to be their Father, who is omnipotent and immortal, and, by a spiritual relation, the Father of all those children, who obey him. Consign those riches to his custody, which you hoard up for your heirs; let him be their guardian, and entrust them to his care, whose Majesty is able to protect them against all the injuries which this world can offer them. The estate which is committed to his keeping, no occasions of the commonwealth can seize; no extent will reach it; no false witness can ever hurt it. What hath God for its keeper must be in perfect security. This were indeed to provide for your posterity; and the best mark you could bequeath to them of your affectionate concern for them; according to what you will find for your encouragement recorded in holy scripture, which is thus expressed in the words of the psalmist, saying; *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed.* And again; *Whoso walketh blameless in righteousness, shall leave his children blessed after him.* A. D. 253.
Psal. 37. 25.
26.
Prov. 20. 7.

15. Wherefore, as a father, you do certainly play booty with your childrens interests, and betray them, if you reject the most likely course of providing for them, and resort not to religion as the surest method. You are guilty of a double fault, in being more solicitous for your earthly than for your heavenly treasure, and in giving up your children to the devil, rather than to Christ; for by this procedure you do not only neglect to make God their Father, and as such to interest him in their protection; but you teach them to misplace their affections, and to prefer their mammon before Christ their Redeemer. It were better far, that you should approve your self to your children such a father, as good Tobit was; that you should give them wholsom council, as he did, and leave behind you directions and orders, like those which he left his son; saying; *My son, I give thee in charge to serve thy God in singleness of heart, and to do what is pleasing in his sight, and to recommend to thy children after thee the duties of righteousness and charity, and the fear of God, and the praise of his holy name to all generations.* Thus again; *My son, be mindful of the Lord our God all thy days, and do not transgress his commandments. Do uprightly all thy life long, and follow not the ways of unrighteousness; for if thou deal truly, respect shall be had unto thy works. Give alms of thy substance, and do not turn away thy face from any poor man, and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. Do according to thine ability; if thou hast abundance, do accordingly; if thou hast little, give according to that little, and be not afraid to bestow thine alms; for thou layest up a good reward for thy self against the day of necessity. Because that alms do deliver from death, and suffer not the person giving them to come into Darkness. For alms is a good gift unto all who give them in the sight of the Most High.* §. 15.
That they do injure their children, who do not lend out their money to the poor, which would be repaid with interest.
Tob. 14. 10.
Tob. 4. 5, 6;
7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

[Tob. 14. 10.] What copy of Tobit our author here followed, 'tis pretty hard to conjecture. The LXX do not now read it, as he did; the vulgar Latin doth more resemble his reading, but yet is not quite the same; the story of *Achiacharus*, &c. is omitted by the vulgar Latin, tho' the LXX have it, and so hath our English version. The Syriac version comes the nearest of any to our author's sense in this passage.

[Respect shall be had unto thy works.] Our version renders it from the LXX, *thy doings shall prosperously succeed unto thee*. The vulgar Latin takes no notice of this verse; so that our author reads this passage peculiarly, when he reads it, *erit respectus operum tuorum*.

[Do according to thine ability.] These words are likewise additional in our author, and are not found in our common copies.

A. D. 253.

§. 16.

A parallel between alms as a spectacle fit for God, and the common shews and spectacles of the world and the devil.

16. How entertaining, my beloved brethren, must^b that spectacle be, which hath the presence and company of God to honour the exhibition of it? In the gentile shews which they give the people, 'tis accounted a signal vouchsafement of the emperors or proconsuls to be present at them, and a peculiar honour done to those who exhibit them; and accordingly their expence is heightened in proportion to the quality of those who are likely to be the spectators: Wherefore when God and Christ are pleased to afford their gracious presence, how rich and costly should the entertainment be, if the quality of the guests received at it, be the rule and measure of expending? How great and distinguished must be the honour of receiving and entertaining such an august assembly? Where the choir of angels, and the whole host of heaven vouchsafe their presence? Where the person who bears the whole charge of this worthy spectacle, is no candidate for the uncertain honours or offices of this world; but is sure of attaining, in return to his present expence, life and immortality in a future and better state? Where he makes no court to the empty applause of a giddy multitude; but receives, without farther trouble, the substantial never-failing recompence of a kingdom in heaven? Farther yet, to the everlasting reproach and confusion of these sordid wretches, who will never open their hands or hearts in an office of charity; let us suppose the devil, coming forth with his servants, the children of perdition; insulting the people of Christ, in the presence of their master, and appealing to his judgment from the tenour of the following comparison. "I never, for my part, received a blow, never was scourged nor crucified, for the sake of those whom you see here joined with me; I never expended one drop of my blood, never have been at the trouble of redeeming my family nor people, at so great an expence as of my cross or passion; I have made them no promises of an heavenly kingdom, neither have I undertaken^c restoring them to paradise, or to that immortality which they once enjoyed in it; and yet you see with what infinite labour and application, with what expence and charge, even with the sale or mortgage of their estates, they^d provide their shews and their entertainments for me; whereas at last, if the performance do not answer, if they are not handsomely exhibited, and to the people's satisfaction, they are only hissed for all their pains and trouble; and 'tis sometimes a good composition, if they escape without having their brains beat out. Do you now, for your part, O Christ, give me a like instance of your people, thus willing and ready to entertain you; let me see the effect of your lessons, upon those of your servants, who are the richest and most abounding; whether they will waste or ruin their fortunes, for your pleasure and entertainment, who are the head of their church, and have given them besides encouragement to expect a most advantageous exchange of an heavenly for their earthly treasure? In the shews which are exhibited for my service and satisfaction, no one is fed or cloathed; no body is so much the better for them, as by a drop of drink, or a morsel of bread; and the whole charge runs out in useless and vain amusement; wherein 'tis hard to determine whose madness is greatest, or whose folly most monstrous, the gi-

^b *That spectacle.* *Quale munus?* This relates apparently to those shews which were given to the people by such as were ambitious of popular favour, or stood for places and offices depending upon the people's votes. The whole parallel is one continued illustration of the title given to this §. and 'tis hoped the most unlearned reader will easily discern the force of it.

^c *Restoring them to paradise.* This looks as if our author had been of opinion, that the souls of good men, at least of martyrs. (See §. the last of the *exhortation to martyrdom*. Note, *without suffering him to wait for it*, &c.) were immediately after death conducted to that very state of paradise which Adam forfeited, and thence at the general judgment, to the full consummation of their bliss: For he plainly distinguishes between the promise of an heavenly kingdom, and of a restoration to paradise N. B. He doth the same again in §. 20, which is also noted.

^d *Provide their shews for me.* Our author always understood these heathen spectacles as the devil's; who was a murderer from the beginning; and the murder of men made no small part of these bloody entertainments: Wherefore amongst the *pomp* and *vanities* of this wicked world, which were renounced at baptism, these infamous spectacles were understood to be comprehended.

"ver's or receiver's. Whereas you your self (you have declared) are cloath- A. D. 253.
 "ed and fed in the persons of your poor and destitute members; you promise
 "moreover, eternal Life, to such as are diligent in these good works; and
 "yet you have, upon the matter, fewer who will follow you, to their own
 "unspeakable honour and advantage, than those who join with me to their
 "utter ruin." What answer now, my brethren, should we be able to return
 to these insolent taunts and reproaches? What excuse or apology shall we find
 for those wealthy misers, who hold their hands so close, and are perfectly
 blinded with a love of this world? How shamefully short are our devoirs to
 Christ, of those which the servants of the devil pay him; since we will make
 little or no returns to our master, for the transcendent benefits of his bloody
 passion?

17. He hath sufficiently notified his pleasure to us, hath instructed us fully §. 17.
 how he would have his servants behave themselves; he hath promised his re- That in the
 wards to such as are abounding, and denounced his vengeance against such as day of judg-
 are barren, in good works; he hath told us beforehand, what his sentence up- ment the sen-
 on each of them will respectively be in the day of judgment. What excuse tence will be
 can we then have for our backwardness, or what defence can the unprofitable given accord-
 servant make for his sloth? What will he be able to plead in bar of that judg- ing to our a-
 ment which his master hath already passed upon his practice? As having de- bundance or
 livered himself to the following purpose; *When the son of man shall come in Matt. 25. from*
his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne N. 31. to the
of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall sepa- end.
rate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:
And he shall set the sheep on his right-hand, but the goats on his left. Then
shall the King say unto them on his right-hand, Come ye blessed of my Father,
inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For
I was an hungred and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink,
I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me, I was sick
and ye visited me, I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the
righteous answer him, saying; Lord, when saw we thee an hungred and
fed thee? Or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger
and took thee in? Or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick
or in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto
them; Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the
least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also
unto them on the left hand; Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting
fire, which my Father hath prepared for the devil and his angels; for I
was an hungred and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no
drink, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, naked and ye clothed me
not, sick and in prison and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer
him, saying; Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger,
or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall
he answer them, saying; Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to
one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into
everlasting burning, but the righteous into life eternal.

18. What, I beseech you, could Christ say more to us? Or what argument §. 18.
 could he use more provoking to love and to good works, than this of imput- A great com-
 ing as done for himself, whatsoever should be done for the destitute and distres- mendation to
 sed; and of construing the neglect of them as an offence against his own per- good works,
 son? For thus he well might hope, that such as should not be moved to the that they are
 offices of charity, by the consideration of fellow-membership in the same said to be done
 church, might, however, be gained by a regard to Christ; that such as might to Christ.

^e Everlasting burning.] See the 3^d book of testimonies, §. 1. Note [which my Father hath prepared.]
 where the reading is the same both of this and the xlith verse.

A. D. 253. otherwise forget the *servant*, would however pay more respect to him, when they should look upon him as their common *master's* representative. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us who really fear God, and have raised our affections above this world to a better, manifest the power of our faith, and of our devotion to his service, by our zeal and diligence in all good works: We may well afford to part with our earthly garments to such as want them, when we are, our selves, to be *cloathed from heaven*. We need not here grudge the giving our bread to the hungry, and our drink to the thirsty, who are to sit down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, at an heavenly banquet. It will be quite out of character, as well as imprudent in us, to *sow* but little, who expect to *reap* in proportion to our *sowing*. But whilst we have time and opportunity allowed us, we should by all means secure our main chance, and provide for our everlasting interest; according to that wholesome advice, which the apostle hath given us, saying; *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap.*

§. 19.
The apostolick
age is pro-
pounded as a
pattern.

19. Let us reflect, my brethren, upon what the body of believers did in the times of the apostles, in the infancy of the christian church; when their first warmth was not yet cooled, when the fervours of their faith were yet fresh upon their minds, and time had abated no part of that spirit which originally animated them; then they sold their houses and lands, and with great cheerfulness entrusted the produce of them with the apostles, to be employed upon charitable uses; they wisely and truly judged, that by this disposition of their patrimony upon earth, they should transfer their interest in those lands to a place which should yield them fruits of increase for ever; that by alienating their houses and tenements upon this changeable and transitory scene, they should purchase everlasting habitations, where they themselves were one day to enter upon the commencement of life eternal. And their unanimity was equal to their charity in all good offices; for so we read in the acts of the apostles; *The multitude of them who believed, were of one heart and of one soul, neither was there any difference between them; neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.* This, my brethren, is indeed to ^a become the children of God by your second birth, and to be *merciful, even as your Father also who is in heaven is merciful*. For the gifts of God to men are exhibited in common; nor is any one excluded from his share of them; but all partake of them in equitable and fair proportions. Thus the sun sheds light and heat upon all; the refreshing showers withhold from none their comfortable moisture; the gentle breezes fan all without distinction; the weary feel alike the renewal of their strength by sleep; and the moon and the stars disperse the lustre of their rays in common. If we now would follow the pattern of this equal dealing, and divide, with our brethren, the profits of our estates and fortunes; by thus dispersing abroad, and giving to the poor, and throwing open to them the enclosures of our property, we should find our selves exalted to the honour of resembling our heavenly Father.

§. 20.
The last consi-
deration is
that of a re-
ward in hea-
ven.

20. But how exceedingly great, my brethren, will be the felicity and triumph of such, as shall be found abounding in good works, when our Lord shall begin to take account of his servants, and to give them the reward he hath promised to their virtues? To exchange with them heavenly things for earthly, eternal for temporal, great for little? To present them before his Father, to

[Gal. 6. 10, 9.] See this passage quoted in the same manner in §. 8. of the next tract.

[Neither was there any difference between them.] Our present copies have not these words; but our author so read the passage. See it in his 3^d book of Testimonies, §. 3.

[To become the children of God by your second birth.] Baptism alone, without a good life after it, was not understood to make any the children of God, if there were time and opportunity for bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. But they became then indeed the children of God, when, after their baptism, they walked worthy of their vocation.

whose favour he had restored them, by the dedication of himself to that great and gracious employment? To enter them upon that life and immortality, which, after their forfeiture, he had purchased again for them by his all-quickning blood? To lead them back to paradise, and to perform the full amount of all his promises by opening to them the kingdom of heaven? These things should never be out of our thoughts and wishes; but we should endeavour to secure our interest in them, by a never-ceasing diligence in all good works. Great, my brethren, is the advantage of them; unspeakable is the comfort which the faithful may derive from them; their confidence towards God, their hope and faith, may thence have mighty support; ^k their sins may thence have their pardon sued out successfully; the thing is easy, and in our power, and yet of the last and highest consequence; it hath, in a manner, all the advantages, without any of the dangers attending martyrdom; it is one of the best and greatest gifts which God can bestow upon man; of the greatest necessity to such as are weak in the faith, and of the greatest honour to such as are strong; with the help of which, the christian obtains more grace, makes Christ his friend, and ^l God his debtor. This is such a prize held out to our works of mercy, as is well worth contending for; in this race of righteousness and charity, of which God and Christ are spectators, we should all be fond of running; and since by our profession of christianity we should be above the world, and all its pomps and vanities; we should suffer no hankerings after the one or the other, to stop us in our course, or to hinder our finishing it agreeably to our character. If the day, wherein we shall ^m either surrender our spirits, or have them torn away from us by the violence of persecution, find us running this race of charity, with zeal and cheerfulness; God will not be wanting in his recompence to our labour of love; the conquest we thus shall gain in times of peace by our works of mercy, will entitle us to a *white* crown; and in times of persecution, will double the honours and triumphs of our *red* one.

ⁱ *Lead them back to paradise.* This is just in the strain, which was before observed in note on §. 16. of this tract, [*restoring them to paradise.*]

^k *Their sins may thence have pardon.* What was the opinion of the antients concerning the power of alms to cover sins, hath already been observed. See note on §. 14. of this tract, [*more sins to atone for;*] and *ibid.* §. 1. [*expunging guilt by alms.*]

^l *God his debtor.* How harsh soever this manner of speaking may sound, its meaning is evidently supported by that of the wise man; *He who hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord*, Prov. 19. 17.

^m *Either surrender or, &c.* *Dis redditionis vel persecutionis.* This opposition of the terms hath inclined me to give them the turn I have done in my translation; rather than to follow *Rigaltius's* conceit, of *redditionis*, meaning our restoration to that paradise, from which *Adam* by transgression fell. The word seems too loose and general, to be intended for so large a reference; and besides, the following words seem to continue, that opposition between *peace* and *persecution*, which hath already been explained.

ⁿ *Red one.* This so manifestly alludes to the martyrdom of such as should shed their blood in times of persecution, that I will not suppose any reader should miss the force of it. Our author's meaning therefore is, that alms alone would entitle any man to one crown; and as martyrdom would entitle him to another, the *almsgiving martyr* would be entituled to two, or (which amounts to the same thing) the honours of his martyr's crown would be doubled to him.



Of the Advantages of PATIENCE.

The tract concerning the advantages of Patience, was written upon occasion of the disputes arising about the baptism administered by hereticks and schismaticks, whether valid or not; and is therefore singularly useful for these times, and for our modern managers of that controversy. Our author, we may observe, insists in it only on general topicks, and meddles not with the controversy it self, whilst he was trying to cool the heats which on both sides of the question grew too exorbitant; as knowing well that, could he bring them once to a truly christian temper, and to mutual forbearance, the question it self would less exasperate. As he mentions this tract in his 73^d epistle to Iubaianus, which bears date A. D. 256, 'tis very probable he might write this in some part of the year preceding, it may be towards the latter end; but, to be sure, before the celebration of that famous council, which was held about the middle of the year 256; because 'tis plain, from the 8th suffrage in it, that our author's letters to Iubaianus and Stephanus, were then read, and 'tis plain from one of them, that this tract was written before it. Wherefore though the difference between our right reverend editor (placing it A. D. 255.) and our right reverend annalist (who rather inclines to fix it A. D. 256.) be not very considerable; I shall beg leave to side with our editor, and assign the following treatise to the year 255.

S. I.
That there can
be no true wis-
dom without
patience.

Patience, my brethren, is our present subject, and its several advantages are now to be laid before you; I easily foresee you will have immediate occasion for the exercise of it, in ^b hearing with patience what I have to say about it; so that this is a virtue which you can never learn, without practising upon it, in each step of the instruction which shall be given you concerning it: And indeed every precept of religion is taught with most success and efficacy, where there is most patience in hearing what is delivered of it. Wherefore amidst the several methods of divine grace, whereby the men of our persuasion are trained up to the rewards prepared for them; I do not see any one more useful, or more becoming our character, who profess all holy obedience to the commands of Christ, than this of a steady adherence to the duty we are now considering. The philosophers among the *Gentiles* make great professions of their regard to this virtue; but then their patience, like the rest of their wisdom, is, all of it, pretence and shew; hath nothing of truth, or of substance in it: For whence, I beseech you, should they learn wisdom or patience, who are utter-

^a *Patience.*] Our author under this word, comprehends almost all that range of virtues, which the antient philosophers placed under the general head of *ἀνὴξ*, bear; and *ἀνὴξ*, forbear, viz. The restraint of the *irascible* and the *concupiscible* in all their various motions; either as prompting to resentment and revenge; or as improving all those virtues which contribute to make a man merciful, mild, gentle, forbearing, forgiving; or else as enabling him firmly to endure all sorts of hardness, and to oppose all sorts of temptation.

^b *Hearing with patience.*] This looks as if our author's tract upon the subject had been originally read from the pulpit, or otherwise, to some audience, before it was made publick.

ly unacquainted with the wisdom and patience of God? As to those who are such mighty pretenders to the wisdom of this world, God hath declared himself in the following manner; *I will destroy the wisdom of their wise men, and I will^c disparage the understanding of their prudent men.* Thus likewise the blessed apostle Paul, who was full of the Holy Ghost, and peculiarly commissioned to call in the Gentiles to the church of Christ, hath given us much the same representation of their wisdom, and warned us of it in these words; *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of^d the Godhead.* And in another place; *Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise, let him become^e a fool to this world, that he may be wise: For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, I will take the wise in their own craftiness.* And again; *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.* Wherefore as these men plainly have no true wisdom, 'tis utterly impossible that they should be endowed with true patience. For patience supposes, in the person possessed of it, meekness and humility; whereas the philosophers, we may observe, have neither of these two qualities; but instead of them are conceited and puffed up, exceedingly pleased with themselves, and please not God at all, because they please themselves too well; so that I say there can be no true patience where there is so much insolence and presumption, so much forwardness and vain boasting.

2. For our parts, my beloved brethren, whose business it is to be in reality, what these philosophers are in appearance only; not in word, but in deed and in truth; who better know how to practise virtue than to boast of it; who live up to that pitch of sanctity which they only talk of: Let us, I say, who are the servants and worshippers of God, give a proof of that obedience which we have learned from his sacred instructions, by the steady practice of this incomparable virtue; which indeed is common to us with God himself: From whom it takes its rise; and derives its main honour and dignity from that illustrious fountain. What is therefore in such high estimation with God, should have a proportionable measure of regard from man; and it should be a sufficient commendation of it to the one, that the other approves and loves it. If God be acknowledged as our Lord and Father, his forbearance and long-suffering should be ours also; for servants should be obedient to their Lord, and children should not degenerate from their father's virtues. Now we may hence take an estimate of God's long-suffering, that he bears so patiently with those continual and repeated affronts which are offered to his divine majesty, by the sopperies and superstitions of a gentile worship, their temples, their altars, and impious sacrifices; that, by his appointment, the day and the sun distribute their heat and their light equally and impartially among the evil and the good; and when he sendeth his rain to water and refresh the earth, all alike partake of the benefit without exception, and the just and the unjust are equal sharers in it. Thus we see that his merciful forbearance makes no distinction between the innocent and nocent, the religious and profane, the grateful and the unthankful; but the seasons are subservient in common to all their uses; the elements minister to them all; the winds, the waters, the harvest, the vintage, the fruits of the earth, the groves and meadows, unfold their respective treasures in equal proportions to the good and evil. And though God

§. 2.
That the virtue of patience is common to us with God.

^c Disparage.] *Reprobabo.* This reading is somewhat singular; the LXX have it *κρύψω*, I will hide; the sense is much the same, be it *reprobabo*, *frustrabor*, or *abscondam*; or if it be put passively, as the original best will bear; *abscondetur*, *reprobabitur*, *latebit*, &c. 'Twas disparagement enough to wisdom that it did not appear.

^d The Godhead.] 'Tis observable, that neither *Irenaeus*, b. 1. c. 1. nor our author add the word *Consubstantialem*; bodily, in this quotation.

^e A fool to this world.] Our author is constant to this manner of pointing and reading, which hath been already observed and noted more particularly in the 69th §. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

A. D. 255. is every day provoked with repeated offences, he restrains his anger, and *patiently* waits for the appointed day of retribution. And though vengeance is always in his power, yet his long-suffering chuses to protract its awards; to see whether the delay of it may not produce some happy alteration; whether men, how long and deeply soever they have been engaged in guilt, may not at last, though late, be turned to God; who hath thus encouraged them in the following words; *I have no pleasure in the death of him who dyeth, but would rather that he return from his ways and live.* And again, by another of his prophets, saying; *Return unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth of the evil which he hath inflicted on the sinner.* The holy apostle hath likewise born his testimony to this attribute of God, and thence endeavoured to persuade the sinner to repent, and turn to him, saying; *Despise thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing, that the patience and goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.* He calls the judgment of God righteous, because 'tis late, because 'tis a great while postponed and delayed; that so by means of God's long-suffering, man may have time and opportunity to provide for his salvation. Then punishment lights very properly upon the ungodly and the sinner, when repentance becomes useless and unavailable.

Ezek. 18. 23,
32. and ibid.
33. 11.
Joel 2. 13.

Rom. 2. 4,
5, 6.

§. 3.
That the pre-
cepts of the
gospel do, in
a very parti-
cular manner,
recommend
patience.
Matt. 5. 43.
to the end.

3. Now for a farther proof to us, that *patience* is a property of God, and that whosoever is meek, and kind, and patient, is like thereby unto God his Father; we should consider those words of our Saviour, when he was giving his disciples a scheme of more perfect duty, which should be sure to conduct them safe to heaven; *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them who persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them who love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the heathens so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.* This was the way, whereby our Saviour judged, that the children of God would become perfect; that after their new, their second birth, the measure of their stature would be hence completed; viz. if the long-suffering of God did indeed abide in them; if that heavenly image which Adam forfeited, were clearly revived and exemplified in their actions. Now how great, my brethren, must be the honour and the happiness of resembling God; of attaining to virtues, whose praises mix with those of our heavenly Father?

§. 4.
That our Lord
exemplified in
practice the
patience which
he recommen-
ded by pre-
cept.

4. Nor did Jesus Christ our God and Lord, teach us how to behave in this particular by word only; but his *practice* accompanied his *instructions*, and he led us by *example* as well as by *precept*. And as the avowed design of his coming amongst us, was to do the will of his Father; amidst the many wonderful samples of heavenly virtue, which proclaimed the Spirit and power whereby he acted, none was more conspicuous nor remarkable, than that uninterrupted tenour of meekness and forbearance, which spread it self throughout his whole behaviour, and drew his Father's image to the life. Indeed

[Which he hath inflicted, &c.] See our author's reading of this passage noted in §. 16. of the case of the lapses.
[When repentance becomes useless.] Viz. after death; till then God forbears us; but then, as St. Clement (or whoever else was author of that 2^d epistle to the Corinthians, which bears his name) hath written; *After our leaving this world, we can neither make any confession of our sins, nor repent of them;* Clem. in 2^d epist. to Corinth. §. 8. Coteler. edit.
[Their second birth.] viz. by baptism.
[Our God.] Observe the high appellation here given to Christ our Lord; as again in §. 16. of this tract.

every circumstance relating to him bore this impression. If we begin with his first appearance in our flesh: It was no small proof of his meekness and condescension, to leave his glorious abode in heaven, to visit our poor earth; for the Son of God, to be clothed with our flesh; and for him, who did no sin, to bear the sins of others. He was content, we may observe, ¹ to divest himself for a while of his immortality, and to become like one of us mortals; that the punishment of an innocent and righteous person, might avail for the pardon of the nocent and unrighteous. The Master submitted himself to be baptized by his servant; and he, who was ^m to confer upon us the remission of our sins, (himself) vouchsafed to be washed in the laver of regeneration. He fasted forty days, thro' whose gracious supplies the ⁿ hunger and thirst of others are answered even to fulness; he disdained not to feel the pinches of want and famine, that such as should be destitute of the word of God's grace, might be filled with the bread of heaven. He entered the lists with the tempter; and when he had conquered his enemy, and had him at mercy, he pushed his advantage no farther, than only to silence him with a mild rebuke. He governed his disciples, not as a master doth his servants, with a lord-like authority; but treated them rather as brethren, and gained them to his will with the charms of a persuasive love: He even condescended so low, as to wash his disciples feet; by all these instances instructing us, that if a master so behaved to his servants, fellow-servants should not be wanting in any kind or condescensive offices towards each other. Nor need we wonder at our Lord for the lowly services he paid to those, who made him some returns by their obedience; since he even bore to the last with Judas, vouchsafed to eat with him, knew all along that he would betray him; yet never exposed him by any open discovery, and did not finally disdain the acceptance of that traitor's kiss. In what he bore from and with the Jews, how great was his temper, and how signal his patience? In those never-ceasing persuasions which he used to draw in unbelievers to the profession of the faith; in his indulgent treatment of the obstinate and unthankful; in his mild and gracious answers to gainsayers; in his concessions and condescensions to the proud and haughty; in his humble submissions to his cruel persecutors; and finally, in his unwearied endeavours, even till the moment of his suffering and crucifixion, to gather those together, within the pale of his church, who had all along been the murderers of his prophets, and rebels against the majesty of God and his Christ? If we follow him to his cross and passion; just before the last act of that bloody tragedy, what affrontive scoffs, and reproachful taunts, were those which he put up with, and heard without emotion? How patiently did he bear the insults of those, who spit in his face and mocked him, tho' it was not long, since, by his own spittle, he had ^o recovered the eyes of a person born blind? He, in whose name the devil and his angels

A. D. 255.

Matt. 3. 15.

Matt. 4. 2.

Matt. 4. from

Y. 3. to 11.

John 13. 6.

Matt. 26. 25.

Ibid. 49.

Matt. 23. 37.

Matt. 27. 29.

30.

John 9. 1, 6.

¹ To bear the sins of others.] Observe our author speaking here to the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction; and more in the following words; That the punishment of an innocent and righteous person might avail for the pardon of the nocent and unrighteous: *Ut innocens pro nocentibus salutem perimatur*: Or, as some copies read, *puniatur*.

² To divest himself for a while of his immortality.] *Immortalitate posita*. So Kings and princes are said to lay aside their majesty, when they condescend to appear without the ensigns of their authority, as private persons commonly appear. Bishop Fell.

^m To confer upon us the remission of our sins (himself) vouchsafed to be washed.] There would be no sense, nor strength, in this amplification of our Saviour's humility, if our author had been of opinion, that baptism was only an initiatory rite of receiving proselytes into the christian religion; if he had not indeed thought, that baptism was given for the remission of sins. For hence our Saviour's condescension in submitting to it was highly magnified: That he, who had no sin of his own to be remitted; he, who was to confer upon us the remission of our sins, should submit to an ordinance, whose main use consisted in the remission of sins by it.

ⁿ Hunger and thirst of others.] *Viz.* of such as hunger and thirst after righteousness, Matt. 5. 6.

^o Recovered the eyes of a person born blind.] *Obulus formidat*; because the person was born blind, and never had his eye-sight, therefore our author uses a word, which signifies our Saviour's having not only recovered, but made his eyes.

A. D. 255. *now* are put to the torture, [P and exorcised out of human bodies,] endured
John 19. 1. scourging; He, who *now* crowns his martyrs with never-fading garlands, had
Matt. 27. 29. his own sacred head crowned with thorns; He, who *now* assigns to such, as
Mark 14. 65. thro' him are conquerors, their palms of victory, was content to be smitten
Matt. 27. 35. by servants with the palms of their hands; He, who cloaths others with im-
Matt. 27. 34. mortality, had his own cloathing taken from him; He, who hath given us
the bread from heaven, had gall offered him to feed upon; and he who hath
handed to us the cup of salvation, had vinegar given him to drink. That in-
nocent, excellent, and righteous person; who, indeed, was all over inno-
cence, excellence, and righteousness it self, was reckoned among the vilest
and worst of malefactors; false witness was in his case suffered to oppress the
truth; the judge of this world was arraigned and judged at a tribunal of this
world, and the word of God was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And though
at the crucifixion of their Lord and Sovereign, the stars of heaven withdrew
their light, the elements were all disordered, the earth trembled and shook; and
a thick darkness overspread the face of it; the sun withholding his rays, and
(as it were) refusing to behold the monstrous villany of the *Jews*; yet was not
he moved all this while to utter a complaining word, nor provoked to display
the lustre of his majesty, by all the agonies of his bitter passion; but to the
conclusion of that astonishing scene he persevered in the exercise of his unpa-
rallelled patience, that so patience in him might have its perfect work. Nay,
after all, he took care even of his murderers, provided they would turn to
him: His patience was so admirable, and his desire to save so invincible, that
he would not shut the doors of his church even against his most bitter enemies.
He was so far from resenting the ill treatment he met with, from those per-
verse and obstinate blasphemers, that if they would have repented of their sin,
and humbly acknowledged it, he not only propounded to have pardoned, but
even to have opened for them the kingdom of heaven. Now what could be a
greater evidence than this of his long-suffering and forgiving temper? To give
life to them by his blood, who were so cruel and merciless as to spill it? Such,
and so great was our Lord's forbearance! Which, had it been less, had depri-
ved his church of the services of *Paul*, that illustrious apostle! We therefore,
my brethren, if we are truly in Christ, if we have put on the Lord Jesus, and
do consider him as the way of salvation to us; should tread in his saving steps,
and follow his blessed example, according to the instruction given us by the
apostle *St. John*, saying; *He who saith he abideth in him, ought himself al-*
John 2. 6. *so, so to walk, even as he walked.* *St. Peter* likewise, upon whom Christ
hath vouchsafed to build his church, hath recommended to us Christ's exam-
ple in his epistle, saying; *Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an ex-*
1 Pet. 2. 21, *ample, that you should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile*
22, 23. *found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when*
he suffered he threatened not, but submitted himself even to an unrighte-
ous judge.

§. 5. 5. Finally; the patriarchs and prophets, all indeed who stand recorded as
righteous persons, and were forerunners of Christ, and resembled to any degree
the character he was to bear; were solicitous for nothing more than whilst
That the pa-
triarchs and
prophets all
have trod the
same path of
patience.

[Exorcised out of human bodies.] These words I have added, as explanatory to the preceding ones; our author unquestionably referring to the power then vested in the officers of the christian church, for expelling evil daemons out of human bodies by exorcism: For which see notes on §. 9. of the tract to *Demetrian*, [they have got possessed of,] and on §. 4. of that to *Donatus* [of obliging.]

[Upon whom hath Christ built his church.] 'Tis not unusual with our author, when he quotes a penman of holy writ, to give him some eulogy for honour's sake. Thus when he cites *St. Paul*, he often says of him by way of character, that he was full of the Holy Ghost; that he was the apostle peculiarly commissioned to call in the Gentiles. So here he gives *St. Peter* the honour of having the church built upon him, from those words of Christ to him in *Matt.* 16. 18. *Bp. Fell.* What doctrine can be built upon this appellation of honour, hath been, and will elsewhere be considered.

[For us.] Should, in all likelihood, be read for you, because all besides proceeds in the 2^d person.

[An unrighteous judge.] *Viz. Caiaphas or Pilate.* See note on this text in §. 39. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

they

they approved their other virtues, that this of patience might have its due share of commendation. Thus *Abel*, whose name was first entered upon the list of martyrs, and who first was honoured with the character of a righteous man; resisted not the attempt of his ^{A. D. 255.} impious brother against him, but carried his character with him to his grave, and died as he had lived, an humble, patient, and galleſs person. Thus *Abraham* believing in God, and laying the foundation of a ſaving faith, when he was tempted in that famous inſtance of his ſon, obeyed with all alacrity, and ſlinched not from the hardſhip which that trial had laid him under. *Iſaac* alſo, who therein was a type of our bleſſed Saviour's ſacrifice, was not wanting in any fit manifeſtations of his own patience and ſubmiſſion, when his father would have offered him up to God. *Jacob* likewiſe, when ſent out to ſeek his fortune for fear of his brother *Eſau*, ^{Gen. 4. 2, &c.} left his own countrey very contentedly, and afterwards exemplified a more ſignal ſubmiſſion when he gained his brother *Eſau* by preſents, though before his enemy and perſecutor, to terms of reconciliation and friendſhip. *Joſeph* ^{Gen. 22. 1, &c.} when ſold by his brethren, and ſent far away from his father's houſe, was not only ſo good as to pardon their offence againſt him; but when they came to buy corn of him, he gave it them freely, and took no money for it. *Moſes* ^{Gen. 28. 5.} was frequently deſpiſed, and now and then well-nigh ſtoned by a faithleſs ungrateful people; and yet was he ſo gentle and good-natured to them, as to in- ^{Gen. 37. 27.} treat the Lord for them. How exemplary, how truly chriſtian was holy *David's* patience, from whoſe loins our Saviour ſprang, according to the fleſh, who had his mortal enemy *Saul* more than once at mercy; and though above all things *Saul* deſired to take away the good man's life, yet when he was in *David's* power, and *David* could have done what he had pleaſed againſt him, ^{Gen. 43. 23.} inſtead of returning evil for evil, he choſe rather to ſave his life, and after- ^{Exod. 32. 11.} wards avenged his death? In fine; amidſt ſo many inſtances of prophets ſlain, ^{I Sam. 20.} and of martyrs honoured with illuſtrious deaths, ^{2 Sam. 1.} patience was ever the diſtinguiſhed virtue which entitled them to their ſeveral crowns, and led them to their glorious kingdom. For no crown, indeed, can properly be aſſigned to any degree or meaſure of ſuffering, except the manner of enduring it hath paved the way to its reward.

6. For a farther evidence of the uſefulneſs and excellence of this incomparable virtue, let us conſider, my brethren, the ſentence which God paſſed up- ^{§. 6.} on our firſt parent *Adam*; who, in the infancy of the world, tranſgreſſed the ^{The advan-} commandment of God; and we ſhall thence be convinced how ſteady we ^{tage of pati-} ſhould be to the practice of this duty which becomes neceſſary to us from the ^{ence illuſtras-} condition we are born to of labour and trouble. *Becauſe* (ſaith God) *thou* ^{ed from our} *haſt bearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and haſt eaten of the tree of which* ^{being born to} *I commanded thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not eat of it: Cursed is the ground in* ^{labour and} *all thy labours on it, in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life:* ^{trouble.} *Thorns* ^{Gen. 3. 17, 18, 19.}

[^{*} Impious brother.] *Fratrem parricidam*: By the Pompeian law proviſion was made, that whoſoever ſhould kill brother or ſiſter, or even a couſin german, ſhould be liable to the penalties of *parricide*, as well as he who ſhould kill his father or mother. Bp. Fell.

[[†] In all thy labours.] *In operibus tuis*, ſaith our author; *ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου*, the LXX, and in *opera tuo*, the vulgar Latin; which ſome interpret in *peccatis tuis*, *transgreſſione tua*; i. e. by reaſon of thy ſinful works. The Hebrew, the Arabic and Syriac verſions read it, *for thy ſake*; ſo doth the Targum of Onkelos, and the Samaritan verſion. I have made it referring to what the words next following introduce, viz. the curſe of eating his bread in the ſweat of his brows, and that the earth would no more bring forth her fruits without labour; not, as the poet had deſcribed her in the golden age (which was a dark adumbration of the ſtate of innocence) when the earth brought forth her fruits without the help of art.

Ipsa quoq; immunis, raſtroq; intacta, nec ullis
Saucia vomeribus, per ſe dabat omnia tellus.
Contentiq; tibi nullo cogente creatis,
Arbutos ſævus montanaq; fraga legebant,
Cornaq; & in duris harentia mora rubetis,
Et qua deciderant patula Jovis arbore glandes.
Ver erat æternum, placidiq; ſerpentibus auris
Mulcebant Zephyri natos ſine ſemine flores.

A D. 255. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground, from which thou wert taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* The effect of this sentence reaches all mankind, so long as they continue upon the face of that earth, for which it was calculated. Labour and trouble are the necessary terms of our abode in this world, till death releases us; and we must eat our bread here continually in the sweat of our brows. A sample of the sorrow we are to have afterwards in life, is given us at our birth, which is always ushered in with tears; the tender unexperienced infant, tho' it knows nothing else, knows how to enter upon the beginnings of life, with lamentation and sorrow; instinct directs it to bewail its future troubles; the soul, by a natural forecast, presages to it self immediately those storms and ruffles, which it is hereafter to meet with in this vale of misery, where the labour is sure to last as long as life.

§. 7.
That christi-
ans, who
wage a per-
petual war
against the
devil, have a
peculiar occa-
sion for this
virtue.

7. This labour would be utterly insupportable, if it were not lightened by patience, which indeed is our only remedy against it, or at least our only consolation under it. This, tho' of great advantage and usefulness to *all*, yet is more especially so to *us*, who are every day exercised with the assaults of our ghostly enemy, are obliged to stand always to our arms, and are kept in perpetual alarms by his various stratagems; who, besides the common incidents and temptations of life, are often obliged to encounter the storms of persecution, to bear the forfeiture of our estates, and the imprisonment of our persons; to hazard and expose our lives, to be manacled and fettered, and to undergo with firmness of faith and patience, whatsoever our adversaries can devise or execute against us, by fire and sword, and the rage of those beasts, to which they so often cast us. Our Lord hath accordingly forewarned us of this usage, saying; *These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.* If we therefore, who have renounced the world and the devil, are thence to expect the more violent assaults from both; certainly we have the more reason thence to fore-arm our selves with the higher degrees of patience, which is the best provision we can make against them. Excellent to this purpose is our Saviour's counsel to us, say-
ing; *He that endureth to the end, shall be saved.* And again; *If ye con-
tinue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the
truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Matt. 10. 22.

John 8. 31, 32.

§. 8.

That the chri-
stian religion
requires our
faith and
hope, which
must have pa-
tience to sup-
port them.

Rom. 8. 24, 25.

8. Our perseverance, my beloved brethren, and our patience, are abso-
lutely necessary to perfect that state of liberty and truth, whereupon we are
entered; our religion at present is a state of faith and hope, which can never
attain their respective ends without the help of patience. The glory we aim
at is not present, but future; as the apostle hath well reminded us, saying;
*We are saved by hope; but hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man
seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for what we see not, then
do we with patience wait for it.* Wherefore 'tis plainly necessary that we
should wait with patience, in order to perfect what we have begun, and that
we may obtain thro' the mercies of God, what we believe and hope for.
Accordingly in another place, the same apostle hath advised those, who would
recommend themselves to the favour of God by works of righteousness and
charity, and put out their substance to interest in heaven, that they would
wait with patience for their expected increase; *As we have opportunity (faith*

Mox etiam fruges tellus inarata ferobar;

Nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristas.

Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina mellis ibant;

Flavaque de viridi sillabam illic mella: Ovid. Metamorph. lib. 1. from y. 101.

This is such a lively description of the state from which Adam was banished, that one would not de-
sire a greater coincidence of sacred story told in prose, with the profane which is borrowed from it;
and only takes a poetick liberty, as to its manner of describing the same thing in verse.

he)

he) let us do good unto all men, and especially unto them who are of the household of faith. And let us not be weary of well doing; for in due season we shall reap. He admonishes us, we see, not to be weary of well doing; not to give out in the midst of our glorious struggle, thro' any pressures of temptation, or any softness in yielding to the force of them; lest by leaving our work unfinished, we should lose the fruits of our preceding labour: According to what the prophet hath pronounced upon the case before us, saying; *The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression.* And again we are elsewhere directed, to hold that fast which we have, that no man take our crown. In which words we are exhorted, to continue steadfast in our duty, with constancy and courage; that so pressing forwards towards our crown, and being almost in sight of it, we may not finally be disappointed; but that our perseverance, in the conclusion, may assure it to us.

A. D. 155.
Galat. 6.
10, 9.

Ezek. 33. 11.
Rev. 3. 11.

9. Now patience, my brethren, not only consigns to us very many and great advantages, but rescues us also from many fatal mischiefs. It not only favours the suggestions of the Holy Spirit, and teaches us a steady adherence to the things of God; but enables us likewise to struggle successfully with the desires of the flesh, and to mortify the deeds of the body, which are so apt to weigh down and oppress the mind; and to entrench our selves securely within the fortrefs of those virtues, which it teaches us. To instance in a few of many particulars which might be named, and from thence to form a judgment of the rest: Adultery, forgery, and murder, are crimes, we know, of the deepest dye: But let patience have the possession and government of the soul; and then the body, which hath once been consecrated to God, and become his temple, will never be polluted with the sin of adultery; forgery will never find harbour in that breast, which hath been solemnly dedicated to righteousness and true holiness; nor will the hand be defiled with blood, which hath once held in it the sacred body of Christ. Charity is the grand cement of our christian corporation; the support of that peace and unity, which, according to the apostle's estimate, is greater and more considerable than either our faith or hope; which hath the precedency of all good works; nay even of martyrdom it self; as being indeed to abide with us for ever in the kingdom of heaven. But take away patience from it, and it will never singly maintain its ground; remove from it the ability to bear and to endure; and you sap its very foundation; so that it will have nothing left for its support. Wherefore the apostle, when he was speaking of charity, very properly and fitly joined patience and long-suffering with it. *Charity is generally brave spirited, and kind; charity envieth not, is not puffed up, nor*

§. 9.
That patience
not only con-
fers upon us
many great
advantages,
but secures us
from many
evils.

1 Cor. 13. 4;
5, 7.

* Galat. 6. 10, 9.] This manner of quoting this passage we had before, in the last words of the 18th §. of the tract preceding.

* Of the deepest dye.] *Mortale crimen*; i. e. They were crimes, which by the Roman laws were of a capital nature, and fatal to the offenders, either by death, or banishment and outlawry. [See note in §. 9. to *Donatus*, capital offence.] And so by the laws of the church, they were crimes which were not to be expiated, but by solemn penance, and that but once allowed of. The 2d part of the 2d chapter of the *penitential discipline*, hath a distinct §. concerning the crimes for which this discipline was inflicted; which appear to have been idolatry, uncleanness, and murder; but then indeed these, with the several branches springing out of these roots, and reducible to these heads, took in all the several species of deliberate sin.

* Solemnly dedicated.] *Viz.* at baptism.

* Held in it.] *Post gustatam eucharistiam*. Some copies read it, *gustatam*; but this is not so natural, nor so agreeable, to the member here alluded to, *viz.* the hand. 'Tis certain, that the eucharistical elements were distributed by the deacon into the hands of the communicants; and so the expression is plain and natural; which yet would be forced into a construction very foreign from its real meaning, if it should be strained to the signification of any modern practice, as to carrying the host in procession; which, we know, was a later institution of pope Urban's, A. D. 1160. Bishop Fell.

* Generally brave spirited.] See note on this passage in §. 11. of the unity of the church; and §. 3. of the 3d book of *Testimonies*. Only in this citation the words *non perperam agit*, (which we translate, *behaveth not unseemly*) are left out, as is the whole 6th verse, both here and in the forenamed §. of the unity of the church; but then that verse is cited in the passage from the 2d book of *Testimonies*. N. B. The words, *seeketh not her own*, are omitted by our author in all three citations.

A. D. 255. *easily provoked; thinketh no evil, ^b kindly covereth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* He intimates, that charity is enabled to persevere in the several duties required from her, by knowing how to *endure* all things. And again, where he uses the following words; Ephes. 4. 2, 3. *Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace;* he plainly enough declares his opinion, that peace and unity can never be preserved among brethren, unless they will be persuaded to forbear one another in love, and by such mutual forbearance, to preserve the bonds of peace inviolate.

§. 10.
That all virtues are preserved and do subsist by patience.

10. Then again, as to what is required of us; not to swear, not to speak evil; to bear the loss of what is our own, ^c without insisting upon an exact reparation; when we are smitten on one cheek to offer the other; to forgive our offending brother, not only unto seventy times seven, but even as oft as he shall offend, without any limitation; to love our enemies, and to pray for them who shall despitefully use us and persecute us; (I say as to all these several instances of duty) how can we imagine it will be ever possible for us to perform them, except we fortify our minds by inuring them to an habitual firmness and patience? We may observe these virtues shining with great advantage in the behaviour of *Steven*; who, when the *Jews* were stoning him to death, in a tumultuous manner, had no thought of revenge, but begged of God the forgiveness of his murderers, saying; *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* The whole procedure was suitable to the character of the first martyr of the christian church; who, being the forerunner of all who were to follow him in his glorious sufferings, was not only to publish the passion of Christ, but to imitate his *patient* submission to it. Were I to proceed in examples; wrath, contention, and discord, are vices which no christian should harbour. Now if *patience* be suffered to abide in him, these will find no place with him; or if they should attempt to gain admission, they would soon be dispossessed, and so his heart would become a peaceable habitation, where the God of peace might delight to dwell. The apostle hath well admonished us, saying; *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you with all malice.* For surely, if the christian hath escaped from the pollutions of the world, and hath put into the haven of Christ, where all is serene and calm, and safe from boisterous tempests; he should not endure the approaches of rage and contention to his breast, who is not allowed to hate any man, nor to recompence evil for evil. Nor is *patience* less necessary for enabling us to undergo the various inconveniences and troubles to which the make of our bodies exposeth us, and with which we are perpetually tormented. For since in the ^d first instance of sin which was ever committed, we lost the original vigour of our bodies, when we forfeited our title to immortality; and weakness and craziness came upon us when we were once obnoxious to death; since we cannot recover our primitive strength of constitution till we recover our immortality; there arises hence a necessity of struggling always with these several infirmities, which would be absolutely insupportable to us without the aids of *patience*. Various are the trials and afflictions wherewith we are exercised by the hand of providence, in the ruin of our fortune, in the rage of fevers, in the torment we endure from wounds and bruises, and in the loss of our nearest and dearest friends: Nor is there any thing which more distinguishes the righteous from the wicked, in these calamities, than this signal circumstance of their respective deportments

Ephes. 4. 30,
31.

^b Kindly covereth.] *Omnia diligit*, is every where our author's reading. See it in §. 12. of the unity of the church.

^c Without insisting on an exact reparation.] This we are to interpret no otherwise than as our Saviour meant it. Luke 6. 29. against a vindictive or contentious disposition.

^d First instance.] Observe here our author's notion of *Adam's* sin, and of its fatal consequences.

under them; for whilst the wicked is impatient and blaspheming, under a sense of his misfortunes, the righteous man is approved, and his patience abides the test it is put to; as it is written; *Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate; for gold and silver are tried in the fire.* A. D. 255.
Eccles 2. 4, 5.

11. To this test holy *Job* was brought, and in his example patience had her perfect work, and her highest commendations. With what variety of torments did the tempter press him? With what innumerable darts did he attack him? He broke his fortunes; he deprived him of a numerous and hopeful issue: He who a little before was rich in his possessions, and richer yet in his children, lost on a sudden the one and the other; and, to add to his misery, he was full of sores, ^e worms eat into his joints, and gradually consumed his decaying flesh. And, that no circumstance of temptation might be wanting to complete his trial, the devil made his wife an instrument of assaulting him; herein resorting to his old artifice, and fancying that, because his first success was procured by this stratagem, he might always expect the like advantage, and pervert that sex into an engine of promoting his fraudulent and mischievous purposes; yet the good man had no disadvantageous impressions made upon him by this or any other struggle he was put to; but amidst all his sufferings and pressures, his patience enabled him still to bless God, and to celebrate his maker's praises. *Tobias* too, after all his splendid works of charity, had a severe trial in the loss of his eye-sight; and we may observe him rising in the favour of God, proportionably to those degrees of *patience* and resignation wherewith he bore his misfortune.

12. Farther yet, my brethren, let us compare the *advantages of patience* with the mischiefs of its opposite; and thence let us form our estimate: For as *patience* is a *christian virtue*, so *impatience* is a *diabolical vice*; he therefore in whom Christ dwelleth, always approves himself meek and patient in disposition and behaviour; as he is the very reverse of this character, who hath his mind possessed by the malice of the tempter.

13. Let us proceed to trace this evil in its rise, and to observe it in its progress. The devil was first impatient at man, being made after the image of God; thence he fell himself, and drew in others to fall with him. *Adam* could not bear with the restraint under which the commandment of God had laid him; so his impatience proved fatal to him, and he forfeited that guardian grace, which he might have preserved, would he have stood firm to his duty. *Cain* could not endure the acceptance which his brother's sacrifice and oblation found at the hands of God; and so he embred his hands in his brother's blood. And the reason of *Esau's* forfeiture and loss of birth-right was founded in his inability to bear with the present want of a little lentile pottage. And was not the original crime of the *Jews*, who have since been so infamous for their ingratitude and disobedience; was it not, I say, at first this very species of sin? They grew restless and uneasy at the delay of *Moses*, who staid longer than they expected in the mount communing with God; and so presumed to demand other ^f gods to lead and to march before them, even the head of a calf, and a figure made with men's hands; and they proceeded ever after agreeably to that beginning; never enduring to be led by the counsel of God, but advancing from the murder of his servants and prophets, to shed at last the blood of his Son our Lord, and to nail him upon a cross.

^e Worms eat.] See note on §. 6. of the plague. [Lowzy disease.]

^f Gods.] In the plural; for as the prophet afterwards complained of them, they had more than one, though the context of *Gen.* 32. 4. names only a *molten calf*; in the singular: But the truth is, they had (as the prophet complains of them, *Amos* 5. 26.) the *tabernacle of Moloch* and *Chim* their images, the *star of the god which they made unto themselves*: Where the *star of the god Remphan*, as 'tis cited *Acts* 7. 43. means the usual emblem by which *Saturn* was represented, viz. an ox blazoned all over with the figures of stars; and *Moloch* represented the sun; which were two famous objects of heathen worship. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 255.
§. 14.
That impa-
tience produ-
ceth hereticks
in the church.

14. Impatience likewise makes hereticks in the church; and draws in men to a rebellion against Christ, like that of the *Jews*; causes them to break the bonds of peace and love, and to engage in the fiercest contests with each other; and, not to enter into the detail of numberless particulars; whatsoever *patience* would *build up*, or whatsoever it would contribute by its happy effects to the *ornament* and *honour* of our nature, that *impatience* pulls down, and contributes just as much to our *reproach* and *scandal*. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us put the advantages of *patience* into one scale, and the mischiefs of *impatience* into another; and let us weigh them together with a just and equal balance; and then certainly we shall abide by *patience*, thro' which we abide in Christ, and hope to come unto God with him: This (we shall see) is a large and extensive virtue, is confined to no scanty measures, nor is bounded by any narrow limitations.

§. 15.
That patience
is a very com-
prehensive
virtue.

15. *Patience*, I say, is a very comprehensive virtue, and tho' it hath only one name, and all its streams proceed from one common fountain, yet doth that fountain spread it self into many rivulets, which form distinct canals, each of them meriting distinct commendations. For to leave our metaphor, for the strict truth of things; there can no single instance of virtue be carried to its just perfection, unless there be a firmness in the mind, to raise it to its proper pitch of excellence. 'Tis *patience*, which brings us into favour with God, and keeps us in it; 'tis that which tempers our choler, bridles our tongue, prescribes to each motion of our minds, regulates all discipline, abates the fury of lust, restrains the exorbitances of pride, extinguishes the flames of discord, is a check upon the power of the rich, and a support to the needy in their distress and indigence: It assists the *virgins* of the church in adhering to their happy profession, and its widows in ^h all the difficulties of keeping themselves so; in the married state, it preserves that unity of hearts and affections, which should ever be between the man and wife; in prosperity, it makes men humble; in adversity, it enables them to endure hardness; under affronts and injuries, it persuades to gentleness and forbearance; teaches men to pardon those who have offended them; and if they themselves have offended, to ask forgiveness with great and repeated importunities: By *it* we are prepared to endure temptation, and to conquer it; to undergo the severities of persecution, and finally to finish our course in a blessed martyrdom. In short, 'tis that, which guards the foundations of our faith; which enlarges and increases our christian hope to the highest and noblest advances; 'tis that, which regulates our actions, orders our steps in the way of Christ, and directs us to follow his example in suffering; thence we persevere in being the children of God, as copying after the pattern of his forbearance and long-suffering.

§. 16.
That the con-
sideration of a
future judg-
ment is a great
persuasive to
this duty.

16. But, my brethren, since I am very sensible how many there are amongst us, who thro' a raging sense of the injuries they have received, and the displeasure thence arising against the persons offering them, are in haste for vengeance, and cannot bear the delay of it till the great day of retribution; these I would with all fit persuasives exhort to forbear till *then*, and to try what advantages they may derive in the *interim* from this excellent virtue: And therefore not to let any keen resentment of injurious treatment too far transport them, nor make them too speedy in their demands or expectations of vengeance; but rather to bear, as well as they can, the ill usage they are likely to meet with from the common ruffles and rencounters of life, as well

[*Virgins of the church.*] That there was such a profession in the primitive church, and how little resemblance there is between the modern and the antient church, in that particular, the reader may observe more particularly noted in §. 3. of the *habits of virgins*; notes [*virgins*] and [*devoted themselves.*]

[*All the difficulties.*] *In viduis laboriosam castitatem.* So Tertullian had made mention (in his book de *virgin. veland.*) *continentia laborioris* of a more laboured continence. And so proceeding in his comparison between virgins and widows, he saith; *Virginitatem gratia constare, continentiam virtute. Non concupiscendi cui concupiscendo inoleveris grande certamen est. Cujus autem concupiscendi ignoraveris fructum, facile non cupiscas.* Bishop Fell.

as from the malicious persecutions which may be raised against them, by *Jews*, A. D. 255. infidels or hereticks; remembring, that it is written; *Wait for me, saith the Lord, until the day, when I shall rise up again to judgment; for my determination is to gather the nations, and to take up their Kings, and to pour upon them my fierce anger.* Where you may observe, my brethren, that our Lord commands us to wait with *patience* for the day of his vengeance: And in the book of *Revelations* he hath given out a farther order, laying; *Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand; so that he, who is unjust, may be unjust still; and he, who is filthy, may be filthy still: And by the same rule, he, who is righteous, may be still more righteous; and he, who is holy, may still be more holy. Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.* Thus the martyrs, who cried aloud for vengeance, and whose resentment made them somewhat too much in haste for it, were bid to wait for a little season, till the times should be fulfilled, and the number of those completed who should be killed as they had been. Thus it is written; *When he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them who were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying; How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them who dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, who should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* When, in particular, vengeance shall be executed upon the shedders of innocent blood, the Spirit of God hath declared by the mouth of his prophet *Malachi*, saying; *Behold, the day cometh, which shall burn as an oven, and all who do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day which cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord.* We read likewise to much the same purpose in the book of *psalms*, where the coming of God in all the pomp of his majesty and solemn judgment, is awfully set forth; *Our God (saith the holy psalmist) shall visibly come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth from beneath, to judge his people. Gather his saints together unto him, those who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself.* The prophet *Isaiah* hath likewise foretold the same thing, saying; *Behold, the Lord will come like fire, and his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury; for by fire and by his sword shall all be judged.* And again; *The Lord of Hosts shall go forth, and shall stir up war, he shall throw all into confusion, he shall cry mightily over his enemies; and shall prevail against them. I have a long time holden my peace; shall I therefore always do so? Who now is he, who saith, That he had long held his peace; but would not always do so? Even he, who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he stood mute, and opened not his mouth: Even he, who cried not, nor caused his voice to be heard in the streets: Even he, who was not rebellious, nor contradictory, when he turned his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to the hands of those who smote them, and hid not his face from shame and spitting: Even he, who when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, answered nothing, and, to the great admiration of *Pilate*, persisted resolutely in his patience and silence.* This is the person, whom the prophet alludes to; who, tho' he held his peace in his suffering, will no longer hold

¹ To judge.] *Διαικόνειν* say the LXX; which our author translates, *at separates*.

² Covenant.] *Διαθήκη* say the LXX; which signifying both *covenant* and *testament*, our author hath translated by the latter word *testamentum*.

A. D. 355. it, when he cometh to take vengeance. This is ¹our God, ^m not the God of all, but of us christians only, who believe and trust in his name: This is he who shall not keep silence, when he shall appear again visibly to the world at his second coming; for as at his first coming his majesty was veiled by his humility; so at his second, he shall come with all publick ensigns of power and glory.

§. 17.
He who is so
much in haste
to take ven-
geance, should
consider, that
God is not a-
venged yet.

17. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us wait contentedly for him, as our judge and our avenger; who will be sure of doing justice to himself, and to the members of his church, as well as to all righteous Persons who have lived since the world began. And let every man, by the way, consider, who is so much in haste to have vengeance executed upon his enemies, that he who is to execute it, hath not yet taken it of his own enemies. God, the Father, hath appointed that adoration should be paid to his Son; and the apostle St. Paul, in conformity to that appointment, hath expressly told us; *That God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.* And in the book of Revelations, we may observe the angel restraining St. John, who would have worshipped him, from doing it, saying; *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and one of thy brethren, adore the Lord Jesus.* How uncommon a person must this Jesus be, and with what extraordinary patience endowed; who, though he be worshipped in heaven, is not yet avenged upon earth? Let his patience therefore be our pattern, in all our sufferings and persecutions; and let us contentedly adjourn all our views and expectations of vengeance to his second coming. Let not us, who are his servants, be so undecent in our wishes or prospects, as to think of being vindicated, till he hath been so; rather let us labour, with our best and most diligent endeavours, to be found constant and persevering in our obedience to all his commandments; that so when the day of wrath and retribution shall approach us, we may not be consigned to a state of punishment with the wicked and ungodly; but with righteous men, who fear God, may enter upon the possession of our joy and crown.

[Our God.] Observe the high appellation given to Christ our Lord, as before in §. 4. of this tract.
[Not the God of all, but of us christians only.] Viz. In a gracious sense, and as constructive of particular favour, he was indeed only the God of christians; even as he was said by our Saviour, and acknowledged by the Jews to be; *Not the God of the dead, but of the living.* Matt. 22. 32.
[Adore the Lord Jesus.] All our copies now read it, *το θεο προσκυνησαι, worship God.* Instead of which our author seems to have read it, *το κυριο προσκυνησαι, worship the Lord.* But whatsoever authority his reading may claim, there is somewhat hence to be gathered in favour of the practice, of worshipping the Lord Jesus; which our Socinians, and their secret adherents, may do well to consider.



Of EMULATION and ENVY.

The following tract, concerning^a emulation and envy, was written upon much the same occasion with the preceding one, and strikes indeed at the root of very many differences, which may happen at any time to arise among the clergy of the same communion. The epistle to Jubaianus doth not mention this tract as it doth the foregoing one; so that there is reason to suspect it might not then be written; because there was as much occasion for his mention of the one, as of the other, had both been then extant. 'Tis natural, besides, to imagine, that when one remedy was not found effectual, for the end 'twas applied to, another might be thought of, and tried soon after; and therefore if the conjecture were right, which assigned the preceding tract, to the year 1555, there will be room and reason for supposing, that the following treatise might fall early into the year 1556. A persecution followed so soon after this year, that we cannot suppose this work should be delayed beyond it; for such a time doth of it self unite those together in interest and affection, who before might have little briges and piques among themselves.

MY brethren; there are many who judge it a slight offence against the laws of virtue, to be picqued at what they observe to be good in any one, and to envy their betters: Thus whilst they think the crime to be small and trivial, they are not afraid of it; from being not afraid of it, they grow to despise it; when they despise it, they are in no manner careful to avoid it; and so the mischief creeps upon them unobserved: By not appearing to them in its proper shape and colours, their caution is not armed against it; but they suck in the poyson without the least apprehension of its fatal consequences. Our Lord hath therefore well and pertinently forewarned us to be *wise* and provident, and to *watch* with all holy jealousy and solicitude; lest our adversary, who is ever himself upon the watch and catch, should steal into our hearts, and there kindle a mighty flame out of a spark of fire, and raise the greatest mischiefs from the smallest beginnings; and by soothing us, whilst off our guard, with a soft and gentle gale, should lull us asleep, and then raise a storm and hurricane about us, which should make shipwreck of our faith, and bring our life and salvation into the extremest peril. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, it is incumbent upon us, to be always upon our guard against him, always armed against those many and various darts which he is perpetually aiming at us wherever he spies his advantage, or finds it likely to wound and hurt us: We must hold our selves in a constant readiness to make head against him, according to the advice we have received from the apostle St. Peter, who in his epistle hath thus admonished

§. 1.

That envy is really the greater evil for being esteemed a little one.

Matt. 10. 16.

Matt. 24. 41.

^a Emulation and envy.] Our author's title is, *De Zelo & Livore*. I knew no better word than *emulation*, to express our author's sense in his term, *zelus*; though I am aware, that *emulation* is sometimes taken by us in a good sense, and is esteemed laudable. Here therefore I must beg of my reader to understand it in such a degree and manner as next approaches to *envy* it self, and as leading directly to it (which in fact it often doth, where it is not duly regulated) and then I am sure we must all agree, that it ought to be interpreted in an ill sense, which is that, wherein, I presume, our author to have meant his *zelus*.

and

A. D. 255-
1 Pet. 5. 8.

and instructed us; *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* He walketh, indeed, round about each of us, and, like an enemy besieging us, nicely pries into our strength, observes our weak side, what avenues are most faintly guarded, and where he may form his attack with the greatest appearance of success and victory. He hath somewhat to propound to every sense and member: He hath tempting beauties to engage our eyes, and easily taints the purity of our hearts, by pleasures thence offering themselves^b without any obstacle or difficulty. He hath all the entertainments of musick to charm our ears, and therewith to unbend the vigour of our christian virtue. He hath his fetters to provoke and exasperate; and thereby to let loose our tongues in railing and reviling; or else to employ our hands in murder and bloodshed. He lures us with the prospect of injurious gain, to engage us thereby in fraud and extortion; and if money be the bait most likely to take with us, he points out the shortest way to be rich, and to make the most of it. He flatters our ambition with the honours of this world, that he may with the more advantage deprive us of our interest in the honours of another. He substitutes appearance and shadow, to cheat us the better of truth and substance; and when his arts and stratagems prove unsuccessful, he then betakes himself to open force; then he proceeds in the way of fury and persecution against the servants of God, giving them no rest nor respite, but trying all conclusions, which he can think of, for their ruin. Thus, in times of peace, he proceeds, I say, by art and stratagem; and in times of persecution by violence, and open force.

§ 2.
That emulation and envy are to be avoided, as we would avoid the devil himself.

2. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, we should equally be fore-armed and provided, against the *force* and *fraud* of our ghostly enemy; and should be as diligent in *resisting him*, as he is in *attacking us*. And because his greatest and most usual resort, is, to those weapons, which fly in the dark unobserved; and the less notice we take of these attempts, the more likely we are to suffer damage from them; we should therefore be the more careful in our endeavours to discover and countermine these depths of satan; amongst which *emulation* and *envy* are not the least considerable. So that if any man will set himself to consider this matter rightly, and will go to the bottom of it, he will find, that no duty is more strictly incumbent upon every christian, than this of guarding, with all his might and caution, against the mischiefs springing out of these unhappy fountains. For indeed the danger is great and imminent, whilst he is thus entangled in the snare of his subtle adversary; and the envy he bears to his brother, gradually proceeds to a settled rancour; that the edge of his own weapon should be turned upon himself, and wound and ruin him, whilst he is not enough aware of it. To set this whole matter in a better light, we will trace this evil to its original, and take our view of it from its first beginnings.

§ 3.
Envy traced to its original.

3. Let us then observe, as we propounded, when, upon what occasion, and in what manner, this mischief had its rise; that we may the more easily and successfully escape the snare of it. In the infancy of the world, the devil himself was split upon this rock, and drew in others to share with him in his guilt and punishment. He, tho' fortified with the powers of his angelical nature, tho' in a state of high acceptance and favour with God, yet broke out into all the rage of jealousy and envy, when he saw that man was made after the image of God; ^c his envy had ruined *him*, before it tempted him to ruin *others*;

^b Without any obstacle or difficulty.] i. e. The temptations which entered into the heart of man, thro' his eyes, and gained him thence to consent, were, as our author truly called them, *faciles voluptates*: There was no difficulty in attaining the pleasures which *sight* could convey to him, whatsoever might be the guilt arising thence; according to that of our Saviour, *Mat. 5. 28. Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart.* Such a pleasure ('tis too plain) may easily be enjoyed, tho' the guilt of it cannot easily be expunged.

^c His envy had ruined him.] Some of the antients ascribed the fall of the devil to *pride*; as our author here doth to *envy*; and in §. 13. of the preceding tract, to *impatience*; the difference is not great between

others; he was (*himself*) in bondage before he sought to bring any *one else* into it; and was lost in his *own person*, e'er he attempted to undo *another's*. Indeed ^d whilst his own *envy* prompted him, to lead away man from the blessing of immortality, he fell, himself, from the blessed state, to which he was created. Now how great, my brethren, must that evil be, which proved so fatal to an angel of light? Which had weight enough in it to sink a being of such an illustrious and exalted nature; and to *deceive* even the great *deceiver*? Envy could not otherwise have such a fatal progress; if the devil were not its author and encourager; and if there were not a great propensity in mankind to follow his example; as it is written; *Thro' envy of the devil, death came into the world; and they, who hold of his side, do imitate him.* From this unhappy principle, the first quarrel which ever was in the world, commenced between the two brothers, and murder was the consequence; whilst *unrighteous Cain* envied *righteous Abel*, and the *good* man fell a sacrifice to the *wicked* one, thro' the suggestions of this mischievous passion; the rage of which had such a fatal issue, and finished so black a scene of villainy, that neither the endearments of so near a relation, nor the heinousness of such an horrid fact, nor the fear of God, nor the sure vengeance which could not but follow upon such an atrocious sin, had any influence towards preventing the foul attempt. ^e Thus was he *unrighteously* oppressed; who gave the first specimen of *righteousness*; he, who knew not what it was to hate any one, felt, himself, the utmost effects of hatred; and he was cruelly slain, who made no resistance. It was this same unfortunate passion, which made *Esau Jacob's* enemy: Because his father *Isaac* had blessed *Jacob*, therefore did *Esau* labour to persecute and injure him; and 'twas *envy* which ministered fuel to all his fire. And *Joseph* was sold by his brethren, from no better motive; for after he had revealed to them the advancement portended to him, from his dream, in a plain and friendly manner, without reserve or design, as one brother should do to another, their envious minds could not, it seems, endure the thought of it! And what else was it which provoked *Saul* to hate poor *David*, and engaged him in various attempts, to murder that excellent person, notwithstanding all his innocence, meekness, and good nature? Even because upon his victory, gained over *Goliath*, who was such a formidable enemy, the people naturally fell into the praises of *David*, and into an admiration of God's favour towards him, by which he had been enabled to do such mighty things! All the rage and venom which proceeded from *Saul* to *David*, sprang, I say, entirely from this mischievous fountain. And to waste no more time upon instances of particular persons; we may observe a whole community lost thro' the same fatality. For were not, I beseech you, the *Jews* undone, thro' the *envy* they bore to Christ, instead of the *belief* they owed him? They *envied* the great and marvellous works performed by him; and whilst the blindness was upon them, which they thence contracted, their error continued, and they could not open their eyes to see the finger of God, in the miracles which he wrought.

A. D. 256.

Wisd. 2. 24.

Gen. 4. 8.

Gen. 27. 41.

Gen. 37. 11.

Matt. 12. 24.

Matt. 27. 18.

between them; since impatience, pride and *envy* have so near a relation to each other, that where *one* of the three, at least where *envy* is, there must be pride along with it. (Bishop Fell.) Observe however, what support our author's opinion hath from *Wisdom* 2. 24. here next quoted.

^d *Whilst his own envy prompted him.*] This passage seems to represent our author, as having been of opinion, that the *envy* of the devil at the happiness of man, was the cause of the devil's ruin; and that he fell, by tempting man to sin; tho' the cause of his so tempting man, was laid somewhat earlier, and founded in his own envious and jealous temper.

^e *Do imitate him.*] *Do find it;* saith our English version; *μιμησάτω δὲ αὐτόν;* are the words of the LXX. But our author here agreeth with the vulgar Latin. *Imitantur illum;* as he often doth; where that version differeth from any version now extant. So that howsoever mixed and blended that version may be, with *Jerom's* alterations, or any changes since made in it, by the popes *Pius* iv. or v. *Sixtus* v. or *Clement* viii. yet 'tis evident, that it was known very early in some form, or other; and we have only to wish, that its truly primitive form were conveyed entire to us.

^f *Thus was he unrighteously oppressed.*] This sentence, had it been placed any otherwise, one would imagine to have alluded to Christ our Lord. But I suppose, it may very well pass in this place, for a rhetorical exaggeration of *righteous Abel's* sufferings. Since our author proceeds in order from this passage to others, as they stand recorded in holy scripture.

A. D. 256.

§. 4.

That we ought
to take warn-
ing by the ex-
amples of such
as have been
undone thro'
envy; that it
is not a single,
but a compli-
cated evil.

4. Upon these considerations, my beloved brethren, I hope you will be all prevailed with, to be ever upon your guard against this fatal mischief; and never suffer it to gain admission into your breasts, which have been solemnly dedicated to the service of God. Let the fate of others be improved to your benefit; and let the punishment of the unwary teach you caution. No man can have reason to believe, that this is a single species of sin, that it is of a narrow compass; or of a small extent. No! for *envy* is of a spreading nature, and fruitful in ill effects: It is the root of almost all the evils which can be named, the spring-head of various misfortunes, a nursery of manifold vices, and furnishes the occasions to all sorts of sin. Hatred and enmity have thence their rise; covetousness grows upon that root; when a man cannot be content with such things as he hath, because he observes another to have more. Ambition springs out of this unhappy fountain, when others have more honours and offices heaped upon them than our selves: And thus whilst the powers of our souls are under the government of this restless principle, and blinded by this haughty passion; all fear of God, and all subjection to Christ, are quite laid aside, and we think not at all upon a day of retribution. Pride and cruelty, impatience and breach of faith, wrath and discord, have, all, their turns of influence upon us; nor do we continue our own masters, after having thus put the government of our conduct into other hands. Thus brotherly love is lost, and the bonds of peace are broken; the truth of the gospel is sophisticated, the unity of the church divided, and heresies and schisms have thence their rise and their encouragement; whilst the priests of God are disadvantageously represented, and his bishops laden with envy; from the complaints of the disappointed, that they were not, rather than others, admitted to holy orders; or that a bishop, perhaps, was made over their heads, when they themselves expected, and fancied themselves entitled to that promotion. Their emulation makes them uneasy and discontented, and their pride and envy draws them at length into open rebellion; whilst their quarrel is, not with the *man*, but, with the *honour* conferred upon him.

§. 5.

That there is
nothing more
unjust than
the envious
man, nor any
thing more
just than en-
vy it self,
which always
punishes and
torments the
person who is
guilty of it.

5. What a strange corruption is this of human understanding; to envy any man either for his virtue, or his fortune? That is, indeed, to turn our hatred either upon the merits of the person, or the mercies of providence; to make another's *good* fortune, our own *ill* fortune; to torment our selves with the prosperity of the great and flourishing, and to interpret their glory as our own shame; to put our selves to the torture, and to play booty with our own repose and happiness; to break the peace of our minds, and to let in upon them a set of repining vexatious reflections: Neither to eat nor drink with ease or comfort; to be always sighing, lamenting, grieving; to have no respite from the gnawing passion; but day and night to feel it plaguing us with never-ceasing demands? Other sins have some boundaries prescribed to them; and when the mischief they aim at is perfected, you hear of no farther pretensions from them. Thus in the case of adultery; when the fact is over, there's an end of it. When the highway-man hath committed the murder he was intent upon, the wickedness of his crime is at a full stop; the thief, when he hath got what he wanted, holds his hand; and the forger hath no more to do, when he hath succeeded in his forgery: But *envy* is endless, and knows no bounds; it abides by the man possessed with it, and never leaves him; but the greater the successes are, which the envied person meets with; so much the stronger doth the envious man's passion grow, and increases upon him without measure or limitation. Hence you may observe him always with a threatening countenance, with a fierce and ill-natur'd look; his complexion pale and fallow, his lips trembling, his teeth gnashing, his words perverse, disjointed and reviling, his hands ever ready for mischief, and for executing any purposes of his enraged heart: And therefore the *psalmist* well hath cautioned us, saying; *Fret not thy self because of him who prospereth in his way.* And again; *The wicked will observe the righteous, and will gnash*

Psal. 37. 7, 12.

upon

upon him with his teeth; but the Lord shall laugh at him, for he seeth that his day is coming. These are the men who are stigmatized by the apostle, where he saith of them; *The poyson of asps is under their lips; their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known, there is no fear of God before their eyes.* The mischief and the danger of wounds inflicted by a sword, are infinitely less than these: Where the hurt appears to the naked eye, there is some hope of a cure, because the case may immediately have relief from the application of proper helps; but the wounds which envy inflicts upon the soul of the person haunted by it, are secret and invisible, and therefore will not admit the application of proper remedies; but gnaw the very heart, and prey upon the vitals of the unhappy patient, unobserved and undiscovered. Do you then, whoever you are who have the misfortune of being subject to this hateful passion, consider with your self, how ill you mean, and would do, if you could, to the man you envy; and yet at last you are no man's enemy so much as you are your own. Whomsoever you persecute with your malice and ill will, it may very possibly and probably be in his power to avoid you; but you can never avoid your self; whosoever you are, your greatest enemy always accompanies you; he is lodged in your bosom, attached to you by such indissoluble bonds, that you can never hope to be rid of him; so that you must always drag your chain along with you, must continue in a state of perpetual bondage, without any allays of comfort to your sad condition, or any prospect of deliverance out of it. To persecute with your malice a man who is interested in the grace of God, is a mischief so deeply rooted, that you will never dislodge it; and to hate a man only for his happiness, is such an unhappiness upon your self, as admits no remedy.

6. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, our blessed Lord having in view the mischief and danger of this ugly passion, and being desirous to prevent its fatal consequences, made the following answer to his disciples, when they were solicitous to know, *which of them should be greatest; he (said our Lord) who is least amongst you shall be great.* By this reply he cut off all occasion and pretence of envy, and drew off all the fuel which could, in any manner, feed that perverse affection. A disciple of Christ must have no such emulation in him; we can have no contention nor strife about greatness, who are to be exalted only by our humility, and have learnt to please our master, by our content with being little. The apostle St. Paul hath therefore well reminded us, who have been enlightened with the grace of Christ, and escaped the midnight darkness of our former conversation, to have our works and our practice such, as may bear and become that light; *The night (saith he) is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* As if he had said, "If indeed the darkness hath forsaken you, and "quitted the possession of your soul; if the night be truly far spent with you, "and its obscurity to a good degree dispelled; if the brightness of the day hath shone in upon you, and you are really become one of the children of "light: Do thence forwards the will of Christ, who is himself the day-star, "and the light to lighten you: But wherefore then do you involve your self "in the clouds and darkness of envy? Why do you blind your eyes and put "out the light of peace and charity, through the black suggestions of that hellish "passion? How comes it to pass that you chuse returning to the devil, after your "solemn renunciations of him? Or whence is it that you are so fond of resem-

5. 6.
To cut off all
occasion of en-
vy, our Savi-
our pronoun-
ced that the
least should be
greatest.
Luke 22. 24.

Rom. 13. 12;

^h He who is least, &c.] Our author here doth not quote the precise words of our Saviour, as they stand in any of the gospels, but only the general meaning and import of them.

"bling

A. D. 256. "bling accursed *Cain*?" Now 'tis evident from what the apostle St. *John* hath declared upon this subject, that whosoever envies and hates his brother, *John 3. 15.* hath the guilt of murder imputed to him; *Whosoever (saith he) hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* And again; *He that saith, He is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now; and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.* He that hateth (he saith) his brother, walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth; for he goeth, indeed, the strait way to hell, without being aware of it; and blindly pushes forwards to his own destruction; leaving behind him the light of Christ, who hath called upon him to reclaim him, *John 8. 12.* and hath told him, saying; *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Now the man who followeth Christ, is he, who treads in Christ's steps, keeps close to his commandments, walks in the way appointed for him, and follows the pattern which Christ hath set him; according to what the apostle St. *Peter* hath written for our instruction, saying; *Christ hath^h suffered for us, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

§. 7.
That it was
not without
its meaning,
that Christ
called his dis-
ciples *sheep*.

7. We should, upon this occasion, call to mind, under what name and title Christ hath described his people and his flock; he calls them *sheep*, in token of that innocence, which is the distinguishing badge of their christian profession; and *lambs*, to represent that harmless undesigning temper, which should ever be their cognisance and character. How comes it then to pass, that the wolf should at any time lurk under the sheeps cloathing? That the man, who calls himself, and pretends to be, a christian, should scandalize the fold, to which he's a retainer? Whereas to wear the badges of a servant of Christ, and not to go in the path which Christ hath appointed for us, is indeed to betray that holy profession, to slur the character, and to leave behind us the way of salvation. Christ himself, we are sure, hath taught us otherwise; and hath told us, that such only shall find life and immortality, as keep his commandments; that such only are wise, as *hear his sayings, and do them*; as *Matt. 7. 24.* also that those¹ teachers *should be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven,* *Matt. 5. 19.* *who should both do and teach them*; for that then, and then only, would the teacher's sound and wholsom doctrine be of use to him, if what he should deliver in *words*, he would also exemplify in *deeds* and practice. There was no one thing more frequently inculcated, or more strongly pressed, by our Saviour upon all his followers, than this; that as he loved them, so they should love one another. But now what obedience is paid to this precept; how is either the peace, or the love of Christ preserved, by such, as thro' the instigations of *envy*, cannot bring themselves to live in unity or charity with their brethren? Wherefore when the apostle was displaying the excellencies of peace and charity, and teaching, that no degrees of faith, no liberality in alms, nor any measure of suffering in the cause of Christ, would be at all available, without keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; he added moreover, *Charity is^h generous, brave-spirited and kind; charity envieth not*; thereby strongly hinting, that he, and he only, was likely to maintain charity, who was brave-spirited and kind, and a perfect stranger to

^h *Suffered for us, leaving you, &c.*] The reader may see this passage cited and noted in §. 4. of the preceding tract.

¹ *Teachers shall be called greatest.*] *Doctorem cum maximum in regno celorum vocari.* The sacred text saith only, *μὴναι καὶ διδάσκειν* shall be called great. They undertake to be most intimately acquainted with the state and polity of the other world, who have assigned a peculiar seat of honour to doctors in it. (Bishop Fell.) Our author, we may be sure, had no such view or meaning; nor could ever, I presume, have dreamt, that the addition of one innocent word, which in his language signified no more than plain teacher, and whereunto the sacred text apparently related, would have had any such construction grafted on it.

^h *Generous and brave-spirited.*] *Magnanima.* See this passage, cited and noted in §. 2. of the preceding tract; §. 11. of the unity of the church; and §. 3. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

all envious emulations. Thus in another passage, when he was admonishing the man, who was full of the Holy Ghost, and who by his second birth was become one of the children of God, to breath most earnestly the things of God; he introduced his address in the following manner; *And I, brethren,* A. D. 256. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3. *could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk¹ according to the flesh?*

8. All the sins of the flesh, my beloved brethren, should be subdued; and our religion should prove its strength and power, in mortifying the deeds of the body; lest by relapsing into the conversation of our old man, we should entangle our selves in an inextricable and fatal snare; concerning which the same apostle hath given us this prudential and wholsom warning; *Wherefore, my brethren, let us not live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye² soon will dye; but if ye thro' the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* §. 8. That emulation and envy should be mortified, as being in a most particular manner the works of the flesh. Rom. 8. 12, 13, 14. If then we are in earnest the children of God; if we have in any manner commenced his temples; if upon our receiving the Holy Ghost at our baptism, we have engaged in a course of spiritual and holy living; if we have lift up our eyes and our thoughts from earth to heaven, and have employed our souls in religious aspirations towards God and Christ, and do breath only the things pertaining to them; then let our practice speak for us, what shall in every part of it be conformable to these sentiments and apprehensions; according to what we find recommended to us by the holy apostle, saying; *If ye are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Coloss. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. We therefore, who at our baptism have undertook to be dead to the sins of the flesh, and to be buried with Christ, and to put off the old man, and have risen together with Christ unto a new and an heavenly birth, should think and act agreeably to such professions; as the same apostle hath elsewhere directed and admonished us, saying; *The first man is of the dung of the earth, the second is from heaven; as is the earthy, such are they who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also who are heavenly: And as we have born the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly.* 1 Cor. 15. 47, 48, 49. But now we can never bear this heavenly image unless, we pursue that resemblance to Christ, upon which we have already entered. Thus, and thus only, will the blessed change expected from us be perfected, and we shall become what before we were not; if the lustre of our new birth do shine in us with all advantage; if the rules, we proceed by, appear every way worthy of God their author, and if he be glorified in all our actions. To this he hath encouraged and incited us by repeated exhortations, and hath promised all fit returns to those who shall so glorify him; *Them who honour me (saith God) I will honour; and the man who despiseth me, shall (himself) be lightly esteemed.* 1 Sam. 2. 30. For a participation of this honour, and for such a degree of resemblance, between God the Father and his children, Christ our Lord in his gospel was endeavouring to form and to prepare us, saying; *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour.* Matt. 5. 43, 44, 45.

¹ According to the flesh. Walk as men, is our translation. But I humbly conceive, that our author's *secundum hominem*, and the apostle's own expression in the original *κατὰ σαρκίν* is here translated more agreeably to the meaning and spirit of the one and of the other, than our common version hath rendered it.

² Soon will dye. Incipietis mori, saith our author, so rendering the words in the original, *μὲντοι* *ἀποθνήσκειτε*.

³ Let us also bear. See this passage cited and noted, in §. 11. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

A. D. 256. hour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to them who hate you, and pray for them who persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father, who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust. Now if men take a pleasure in the resemblance of their children to them, and the satisfaction of a father is increased by observing a similitude between the root and its branches, and by seeing his own features copied out in his offspring; why should we not conceive in God somewhat near a-kin to such a reasonable pleasure, upon children being born to him after a spiritual manner, in whom his image shall shine, and by whom his glorious perfections shall be transcribed and imitated? What an handle of triumph, and of holy exaltation, will it be to you, if God shall not pronounce of you, and such as you, what once he did of his people the Jews; *I have begotten and brought up children, and they have despised me*: But if instead of any such complaint against you, Christ shall commend and applaud your conduct, and invite you to receive the reward of it in those transporting words; *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.*

Isai. 1. 2.

Mat. 25. 34.

§. 9.
That in regard
to that com-
mand of their
heavenly Fa-
ther, and to
the reward
laid up in
store for them,
christians
should culti-
vate peace
and charity.

9. With these, and such like considerations, my beloved brethren, we should endeavour to arm and strengthen our virtue, against the several assaults of our ghostly enemy. The book of God should be before our eyes, our hands should work the thing which is good, and we should set the Lord always before our thoughts. We should pray without ceasing, and never be weary of well-doing. We should be occupied evermore in some spiritual employment; that in what part soever the tempter shall form his attack against us, he may find every pass well-guarded, and all the powers of our souls in readiness to resist him. There are more crowns than one for the christian to aim at; the martyrs crown is not our only one; but even times of peace and settlement present us with occasions of trying our strength and courage in our spiritual warfare, and thence of being crowned with the trophies of victory upon our successful struggles. There is a crown due to that victory which overcometh our lusts; another to the resistance we shall make against the impressions of wrath, and a sense of injurious treatment; and a third to our contempt of superfluous wealth. Thus our faith hath also its proper commendation, when in view of our future recompence, we endure affliction patiently. Our humility is entitled to its portion of honour, when affluence and prosperity do not swell us with pride and insolence. He, whose dispositions lead him to have pity on the poor, and to relieve the exigences of the necessitous and distressed, gains thereby the recompence of a treasure in heaven: And he, who is a stranger to *emulation and envy*, and loves his brethren, in simplicity of heart, and unity of affection, becomes interested in the reward which is assigned to the peaceable and charitable. The race of these several virtues we all run daily; it is our proper business and employment to press forwards with our loss of time to *these crowns* of righteousness. Wherefore that you, who have hitherto been governed by the malignant influences of an *envious* disposition, may not lose your share in these several trophies of honour and victory; you must be persuaded to lay aside all perverseness of mind and temper, and to pursue those courses which may lead you directly to the way of salvation; to weed out of your heart those thorns and briars which would choak it, and to receive into it those seeds of righteousness which may spring up, and bring forth fruit abundantly; to disgorge the gall and venom, and all the malignity of contentious humours; to cleanse your mind of all that filth wherewith envy had polluted and defiled it; and to sweeten the bitterness and rancour of your soul, with a truly christian and healing *alkalie*. The cross of Christ, by proper applications, will do that for you, which the tree did for the *Israelites* at the waters of *Marah*; as the wood of that tree sweetned the taste of them, and made them palatable, and thereby did *typically* represent to us the bene-

Exod. 15. 25.

fits

fits of the cross of Christ; so, I say, in the *antitype*, will all the bitterness of your soul be sweetned, if the cross of Christ be applied to it in a proper manner: You will then want no cure nor medicine for any of its distempers; but may derive your remedy, ° from what originally impaired your health. Wherefore, be persuaded, I again beseech you, to love henceforwards those whom before you hated; embrace with a cordial and sincere affection, those whom you have hitherto envied, and laboured to disparage, by injurious and diminishing reflections: Imitate the good, if you are able to come up to them; and if you are not, rejoice however, and congratulate with the felicity of your betters, for their superior attainments; entitle your self to some share with them in their deserved applauses, by uniting with them in hearty love, and in the bonds of an indissoluble charity. Your debts will be forgiven, when you appear inclinable to forgive; your offerings will be accepted, when you come before God with peaceable and healing dispositions; your sentiments and your actions will be all directed from above, when your mind is intent upon God and his righteousness: As it is written; *Let a man think of such things, as are just and righteous, that God may direct his goings.* Now you have many things of this kind, whereupon you may employ your thoughts. For instance in the first place; you may turn your views towards paradise, to which Cain found no return, when *envy* once had moved him to kill his brother. You may entertain your self with meditations upon the kingdom of heaven, to which none will be admitted, who are not disposed to live in unity and unanimity. You may remember too, that none but *peace-makers* are entitled to the name or character of the *children of God*; none but such as act agreeably to their heavenly parentage, and are united together like God and Christ. Imagine your self, therefore, appearing before the presence of God, and accounting to him for each step and passage of your past conversation; and consider that your way to see him hereafter with pleasure, will be so to behave, that he may see your actions here with pleasure; accordingly you must endeavour to deserve his pardon and his favour: And as you expect to please him for ever in his kingdom of *glory*, you must labour to please him now beforehand in the kingdom of *grace*.

A. D. 156.

Matt. 5. 24.

Prov. 16. 1.

Matt. 5. 9.

° From what originally impaired your health. Viz. as a tree was our original misfortune, by our first parent's eating of its forbidden fruit; so the tree which our Saviour's cross was made of, was our cure and remedy.

° Let a man think. This reading is a literal translation from the LXX's, who differ somewhat from the Hebrew, and more from the common versions. N. B. The *Alexandrian MS.* hath not this, nor the two following verses.



The

The Council of CARTHAGE.

A. D. 256. *We now are come to that famous council of Carthage, which was the third held by our author upon the subject of re-baptizing those, who received their baptism from hereticks and schismaticks. The first which was held in the preceding year, and to which occasion was given by the disputes about the manner of receiving such as should return from the Novatian heresy, did not effectually terminate that controversy. The epistle of that council, is the lxxth in number, and is addressed to those who had put the question. Wherefore our excellent metropolitan convened another at the Easter of the year 256, consisting of seventy one bishops; wherein the sentence of the former was confirmed, as to re-baptization, and another sentence added to it, condemning such clergy, as should revolt from the catholick church to heresy or schism, to communicate upon their return to the church, all their lives as lay-men. According to custom, and agreeably to the good correspondence which was maintained between the several bishops of the catholick church, and especially of the more eminent sees, these determinations were transmitted to Steven, bishop of Rome, who was by no means satisfied with them, but threatned that he would hold no farther communion with Cyprian, and such as adhered to him, if they persisted in them. So that upon the ill success of the two former attempts our most vigilant prelate summoned a third council, more numerous than the preceding ones, to call over this case afresh; and accordingly his colleagues were drawn together from the several provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, to the number of eighty five; who appeared in their own persons, and two more by proxy, (in all eighty seven.) at the very beginning of September: He opened it, with telling them what had been before transacted in this affair, and what had passed upon it, between him and his colleague Jubaianus; and then, reserving his own opinion, as president, till the last, he collected the rest in the order, and to the purpose, following.*

The suffrages of lxxxvii bishops assembled in the council of Carthage, upon the point of ^a baptizing hereticks.

The opening the session.



WHEN diverse bishops were assembled together upon the first day of September, from the several provinces of ^bAfrica, Numidia, and Mauritania, together with their presbyters and deacons, and a great part of the laity was also there present; upon reading the

^a Baptizing.] They did not call it re-baptizing, because the baptism which these people received from hereticks, was censured as no baptism at all, but a perfect nullity, as if nothing had been done for them in any manner towards christian baptism.

^b Africa.] Numidia and Mauritania were in Africa, taking the word in its larger extent; but (as Pliny hath observed, b. 5. c. 4.) there is a more restrained and proper signification of the word, as comprehending only the Zeugitana Regio, which came into the power of the Romans, and was reduced to the form of a province upon their taking Carthage. Bishop Fell.

several letters which passed between *Jubaianus* and *Cyprian*, concerning the baptism of hereticks, together with the conclusive answer of *Jubaianus* to him; ^c *Cyprian* stood up, and spoke to the following purpose; "Ye have heard, my beloved colleagues, what my brother and fellow-bishop, *Jubaianus*, hath written to me, and how he hath advised with me upon the subject now before us, concerning the baptism of hereticks; my answer hath been likewise read to you; wherein I delivered the opinion which I had ^d more than once already declared agreeable to my sentiments; viz. That hereticks coming over to the church, ought to be baptized and sanctified with her holy baptism. Ye have likewise heard the reply of *Jubaianus*, which he, like a man of great modesty and true religion, sent to my letter; wherein you may observe him not only concurring in opinion with me, but making moreover his farther acknowledgments for the light and information he received from me. What is therefore now farther incumbent on us, is only for each of us to deliver our own sentiments upon this question; and to preserve such a temper in them, as not to take upon us the judging any man, or ^e denouncing our anathema's, against such as shall differ from us. I may presume there is no one of our brethren, who will assume to himself an episcopal authority over those of his own order, or to be ^f a bishop of bishops; or to drive any of his brethren, by haughty menaces or tyrannical compulsions, into his own persuasion; since every

A. D. 256.

^c *Cyprian stood up and spoke.* He gave his vote upon this question last; this was only in order to state it, and to open the debate. Bishop Fell.

^d *More than once.* Viz. in the two preceding councils more solemnly; as well as more frequently upon less occasions.

^e *Denouncing our anathema's.* This looks as if our author had apprehended the question before him, to be a point of discipline rather than of doctrine. For had it been the latter, the declaration of the synod would have been pointed with anathema's. If it were the former, it was pretty much in the power of the church to extend or to relax it. And we shall see accordingly in the dissertation, which I shall affix to the close of this council, that it was afterwards so esteemed of. See note [as shall seem to himself most reasonable] in ep. 69. §. 10.

^f *A bishop of bishops, and every bishop hath liberty, &c.* Here our author touches a little upon pope Steven's undue pretences, of determining for others, in a question of this kind and nature. Had it been a point of doctrine, every bishop might have insisted upon its being owned by his colleagues. One had no more right indeed to insist than another; but I say each might have insisted, that the depositum should be kept by all. Yet it was an unwarrantable presumption in Steven to direct any bishop's behaviour by his own single authority in a diocese not belonging to him, which, as well as Steven's, was entrusted to each bishop by Christ, and none, but Christ, was properly the judge; tho' such as walked disorderly were justly liable to the reprehension of their brethren, in a brotherly way; and if that were not effectual, then (according to our Lord's advice *Matt.* 18. from *Y.* 15, to 20.) by more severe methods of discipline; and, finally, by the sound parts withdrawing themselves from the unfound, *2 Thess.* 3. 6. *1 Tim.* 6. 5. What our author here inculcates of no one bishop having authority over another, is perfectly consistent with the discipline and order of ecclesiastical government; only he would have no one bishop assume any power of determining for another in an authoritative way, how that other should govern his own diocese; or pretend to call his colleague to account for it. What bishops met together in a council might, upon advising with each other, determine, for the maintenance of peace and order, or for the preservation of wholsom and sound doctrine, was quite another view; which the convention of this very assembly shews our author to have been a friend to: As do his principles laid down in his book of the *unity of the church*, (particularly §. 4.) where he saith, That *the episcopate is single, and that there is but one; of which each bishop holds his part, with the privilege and the duty of being interested in the whole*; these words (I say) represent his opinion to have been, that each single bishop was a bishop of the whole church; tho' not exclusive of, nor superior to, his brethren. This however was a justification of such, as should depart from the communion of those, who behaved not agreeably to their character and trust. They were not to depart from them, as having authority over them; but as entrusted by Christ with an interest in, and a care of, his whole flock; which when they should see endangered by false doctrine, or corrupt practice, they were in duty bound to forewarn, and to carry into a place of safety such as would follow them. In matters of external regimen, and for the more convenient discharge of their respective functions, particular districts were assigned to each, in the purest ages of the church; yet when this was done, no one did so lose his interest in the whole, as not to think the preservation of it incumbent on him, when he saw it in danger. Upon these principles our bishops departed from communion with the bishop of Rome and his adherents. Had they done it upon any less views, than the extreme danger of their flocks, they had done very irregularly, against the ancient rules of discipline, which commanded a good and brotherly correspondence between the bishops of the christian church, and, by the way, assigned to each his proper province, to which alone his ordinary care and inspection should be confined. Now what was so appointed was supposed to have been confirmed by the authority of Christ, *Matt.* 18. 19. Yet upon this rule, we find the bishop of Rome a very early encroacher, without any colour of authority, and against the eldest precedents. And therefore, as from a brother walking disorderly, each of his fellow-bishops ought to withdraw themselves, and to warn his people of their danger in adhering to him.

P p p

"bishop

A. D. 256. " bishop hath equal liberty of judging and determining upon any question
 " which comes before him, and he can no more be judged by, than he can
 " judge another. Wherefore we should be all persuaded to wait for the judg-
 " ment of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom alone all our powers to govern
 " his church are derived to us, and who alone hath authority to call us to
 " account for the use we make of them."

I.

The suffrage of
 Cæcilius & of
 Bilita.

Ephes. 4. 4, 5.

I know of but one baptism, and that only to be had *in* the church; as to any celebrated *out* of it, it is a perfect nullity. It can be no where, but there only, where there is true hope and a full assurance of faith, as it is written; *One faith, one hope, one baptism*; not amongst hereticks, where there is no hope, no true faith; but where every thing is falsified and inconsistent; where a man who, himself, is under the influence and power of satan, takes upon him^a to exorcise; where the baptismal interrogatories are put by a person whose mouth breaths poyson, and whose words will eat as a canker; where a man who, himself, hath no true faith, assumes the office of instructing others in it; where he whose own sins are yet unpardoned, pretends to confer the remission of sins; where antichrist baptizes in the name of Christ; where he who is under the curse of God, blesteth in his name; where he, who is dead himself, promiseth life to others; where a stranger to peace undertakes toⁱ give it; where a blasphemer calls upon the name of God; where the office of a bishop is in the hands of a profane administrator, and sacrilege it self so presumptuous as to erect an altar. And the most dreadful thing of all is yet behind; for in this case the ministers of satan are so daring, as even to^k celebrate the holy eucharist; and let the followers of *Novatian* now deny, if they can, any one of these particulars; or say, that hereticks are not justly chargeable with each of them. Observe here to what grievous straits the church is reduced, when she is forced upon admitting those to her communion, who have never been baptized, nor received the remission of their sins. This, my brethren, is a consequence, which in my opinion, we ought to avoid, and to withdraw our selves from so great a mischief and danger; and therefore to abide by that *one baptism*, which God hath entrusted with his church alone.

II.

The suffrage of
 Primus of
 Misgirpa.

My opinion is, that every person coming over from heresy should be baptized: Inasmuch as he deceives himself, who fancies he hath there received the one true baptism, which is no where but in the church. For as there is one God,

^a Of Bilita.] A town of Mauritania. But as to proper names of places, and persons, *Pliny's* observation is, doubtless, very just, that they are never rightly pronounced, but in their own languages. Bishop *Fell*.

ⁱ To exorcise.] Every person unbaptized was supposed to be under the power of the devil, as some were in an extraordinary manner possessed by him; and therefore exorcism preceded baptism. See note on §. 4. to *Dunatus* [of obliging, &c.]

^k To give it.] *i. e.* The peace of the church.

^k To celebrate the holy eucharist.] *Eucharistiam facere*. The word *facere* is a sacrificial term; as in *Virgil. Bucol. Eclog. 3. v. 77. Cum faciam vitula*; where *facio* stands for the whole action of sacrificing, and *Columella. b. 2. last chapter, nisi prius catulo faceris*, confirms this construction. So our Saviour's *vere facere*, in the words of institution (*this do*), have also a sacrificial aspect, and denote the sacrificial action there recommended to us; and *rem divinam facere*, is a known expression for offering sacrifice. N. B. *Augustin* in lib. 6. *de baptismo*, answers the whole argument of this first suffrage, by putting the case of a wicked administrator of baptism in the church, or of a wicked receiver of it; and argues from it, that to such, (either giver or receiver) all those hard names and characters belong, which *Cæcilius* here gives to hereticks and schismatics; yet he says that no body pretends to renew the baptisms of the former; and therefore he conceives, should not of the latter.

[*Primus of Misgirpa*.] *Augustin* calls him *Primus Felix*, which (as *Bp. Fell* hath observed) gives a suspicion, that his name might be *Felix*; and because there were several of that name in this council; therefore *Primus* was set to distinguish this *Felix*; by the priority of his suffrage, *Augustin* answers his argument by saying, that persons were not baptized, upon their return to the church, who received their

God, one faith, and one church; so in this one church there is one baptism, A. D. 256.
and one sanctification. In fine; one only method of perfecting the man of God;
whatever is done out of it, hath no efficacy in procuring our salvation.

III.

They who hold the validity of heretical baptisms, do in effect disallow of ours. *The suffrage of Polycarp of Adrumetum.*

IV.

Though we are well assured of the testimony which holy scripture bears to the baptism which hath the remission of our sins, entailed upon it; yet I think we should upon this occasion, more particularly declare our sentiments concerning it. Wherefore my opinion is, that such hereticks and schismatics as come over to the church, and have received a counterfeit and false baptism, should be baptized in the fountain of living waters. I say, all hereticks and schismatics, returning to the bosom of the church, should receive her baptism. This I take to be the sense of holy scripture, as well as of our holy brethren, of blessed memory, who have gone before us. I add, moreover, that such as have officiated amongst them as clergy, should be admitted amongst us only to lay-communion. *The suffrage of Novatus of Thamugade.*

V.

The scriptures are very full in their declarations, that a baptism, administered by hereticks and schismatics, is no true baptism; inasmuch as their bishops themselves are no better than false christs and false prophets; for ob-*The suffrage of Nemefianus of Thubunæ.*
serve what the Lord hath spoken by the mouth of Solomon; *He, who trusteth in lies, feedeth the wind, and is like a man who pursueth birds when they have taken wing. For he forsaketh the tract of his own vineyard, and wandereth from the path of his own field. Thus he walketh thro' unfrequented and barren ways, and thro' a land which lacketh moisture; and he gathereth nothing but useleß weeds.* And again a little farther; *Abstain from strange water, and drink not out of another's fountain, that your life may be prolonged, and that many years may be added to it.* And our blessed Lord in the gospel with his own mouth hath thus pronounced, upon the case before us, saying; *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* This is that Spirit, who is said to have moved upon the face of the waters. As indeed the Spirit (in our present case) cannot act without the water, nor the water avail without the Spirit. They do therefore make too favourable a construction for themselves *P Prov. 9. 12. Ibid. 19. John 3. 5. Genes. 1. 2.*

their baptism in it, and afterwards left it; and the reason was, because they did not lose their baptism; when they left the church: That it was true indeed, that what was done out of the church, had no efficacy towards salvation, whilst the persons continued out of it; but yet might have its effect upon their return to it, without renewing the sacred action.

The suffrage of Polycarp. This is answered by *Augustin*, arguing thus: If the baptism which hereticks give, be their own baptism; then the baptism which is conferred by wicked administrators, though in the church is their own too; and hence it would alike follow, that neither would be available to the forgiveness of sins. But in truth the baptism is *Christ's*, by whomsoever administered; and therefore the persons who have received it, when otherwise qualified for its benefits, may reap them in full without repeating it, upon their return into the church.

The suffrage of Novatus. To this *Augustin* answers, that its author hath named indeed the scriptures and his colleagues, but produced no vouchers from either.

The suffrage of Nemefianus. To this *Augustin* hath replied, that all the texts of scripture alleged by *Nemefianus*, prove as much against the validity of baptisms administered by or to ill men, as against the baptism administered by or to hereticks and schismatics; since naughty receivers of it do not certainly receive the spirit, nor are they born again by it when they are baptized. [*N. B. Thubunæ was a city of Mauritania. Bp. Fell.*]

P. Prov. 9. 12. This quotation is only to be found in the LXX. interpreters, and in the Arabic and Syriac versions; the original hath not a word of it, yet *Augustin* allowed it as well as our author; and *Clemens Alexandrinus* quoted it in *Padag. b. 3.* So that the version of the LXX was universally acknowledged, even where it departed from the Hebrew.

who

A. D. 256. who fancy, that they may^a receive the Spirit by imposition of hands, and so be admitted into the church; since it is evident, that both ceremonies are requisite to such admission, and that they ought to be baptized in the catholick church, as well as to receive imposition of hands in it. Then indeed they may become the children of God, when they follow the apostle's advice, by endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *Ephes. 4. 3, 4.* One body (saith he) and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. This is, all of it, likewise the language of the catholick church. Thus our Lord hath again declared in the gospel; *John 3. 6.* That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that *John 4. 24.* which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. For God is that Spirit; and so by being born of the Spirit, a man is born of God. Wherefore whatsoever hereticks and schismatics do, is, all of it, carnal; as the apostle bears witness, *Gal. 5. 19, 20.* saying; The works of the flesh are manifest; which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, incest, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, variance, emulation, wrath, schisms, heresies, and such like; of which I have told you before, as I now also tell you again, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. The apostle, you see, censures those who cause division, that is, hereticks and schismatics, in an equal degree with the very worst of offenders. Wherefore except they receive effectual baptism in the catholick church, which is but one, they are not entitled to salvation; but shall be doomed to the punishment of such as are carnal, in the day, when our Lord Christ shall come to judgment.

VI.

^r The suffrage of Januarius of Lambasis.

My opinion is, that all hereticks and schismatics, should be baptized, and admitted into the holy church by that solemn rite. And I conceive my opinion to be founded upon the authority of the sacred scriptures.

VII.

^f The suffrage of Lucius of Castrogalba.

Matt. 5. 13.

Matt. 28. 18,

19.

^v *Prov. 14. 9.*

Our Lord in the gospel having said; *Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing; but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men:* And again after his resurrection, upon the mission of his apostles, having thus charged them, saying; *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them^e in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;* it being moreover apparent, that hereticks, as the enemies of Christ, have not amongst them the full and entire virtue of this sacrament, and that schismatics can season no body with the true wisdom which is from above, since by their separation from the church of Christ, which is only one, they have lost their own savour, and are become quite contrary: Upon all these considerations I think we should hearken to that passage of scripture which tells us, *That the house of those, who are in opposition to the law, ought to be cleansed;* and accordingly,

^a Receive the Spirit by imposition of hands.] This was uncontested. They were not received, as now, merely because they were pleased to come over to the church; but were obliged to receive imposition of hands, before they were admitted; which was insisted on by those, who did not insist upon their being baptized.

^r The suffrage of Januarius.] To this *Augustin* replies, that a general council had determined otherwise, and had therein proceeded by authority of holy scripture. The determinations of the first and second general councils upon this subject, will be considered at the close of the council, in the dissertation which shall be subjoined to it. N. B. *Lambasis* was a city of *Numidia*.

^f The suffrage of Lucius of Castrogalba.] This was also a city of *Numidia*. *Augustin* answers this, as he did the former suffrage, by saying, that the sacrament it self was not therefore insignificant, because it was received unworthily, either in the church or out of it. He says, that ill men in the church, are as much in opposition to the law, as hereticks out of it.

^e In the name.] In nomine. The Greek reads it, *eis to onoma* into the name.

^v *Prov. 14. 9.*] The LXX read this in a manner peculiar to themselves; and very differently from the Hebrew, as well as from all the versions; and our author here, as usually, followeth the LXX.

they, who are defiled by receiving their baptism from such as are in opposition to the christian law, ought first to be ^w cleansed, and then to be baptized. A. D. 256.

VIII.

Upon reading the letters of our most beloved brother *Cyprian*, to *Jubaianus* and *Stephanus*, in so great an assembly of venerable bishops, I cannot but think them so well supported by authority of holy scripture, that thro' the grace of God, I trust we shall all be unanimous in our sentiments, and go into the same opinion. Wherefore I give my suffrage, that all hereticks and schismatics, who have a mind to be received into the catholick church, should wait for their admission, till they have been ^y exorcised and baptized; such only excepted, who were baptized originally in the catholick church; and these, I think, on their return to it, should be directed to receive ^z imposition of hands in order to their penance, and so should be reconciled to the church, in the common course of the penitential discipline.

^x The suffrage of Creicens of Cirta.

IX.

My opinion is, that hereticks should be baptized upon their coming into the church; because out of it sinners cannot receive the remission of their sins.

^a The suffrage of Nicomedes of Segermæ.

X.

The true doctrine of our holy mother the catholick church, hath always, my brethren, been with us, and doth yet abide with us, and especially in the article of ^c baptism, and the trine immersion wherewith it is celebrated; our Lord having said; *Go ye, and baptize the Gentiles, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: Wherefore since we are sure, that hereticks have amongst them neither the Father, nor the Son, nor yet the Holy Ghost; they who come over to our holy mother the church, should be *indeed* regenerated and baptized; that their ^d canker may be cured, and the wrath of God which bringeth damnation may be appeased, and the consequence of their error be done away, and all be sanctified and pardoned, by that holy and heavenly laver.

^b The suffrage of Monnulus of Girba.

Matt. 28. 18.

^w Cleansed first.] Viz. by repentance; preparatory to their admission into the church by baptism.

^x The suffrage of Creicens of Cirta.] Cirta was a famous town of Numidia, about 321 miles distant from Carthage. *Augustin* founds his answer to this suffrage, upon the exception it makes in favour of such, as had been baptized in the church: From whence he argues, that, if they could retain their own baptism out of the church, why might they not communicate it to others? It would avail (he argues) neither the one, nor the other, whilst out of the church. But why, upon their return into the church, might not the baptism of each begin to be available to the one (without a repetition of it) as well as to the other?

^y Exorcised.] See note on this word in the first suffrage of this council, as also note on §. 4. to *Donatus*. [of obliging.]

^z Imposition of hands in order to their penance.] Penitents were admitted to their state of penance by imposition of hands, which was often repeated during their continuance under the penitential discipline. This we shall find plainly intimated in our author's 15th epistle; and the 15th canon of the council of *Agatha* directs such, as should resort to the bishop for penance, to receive at that time imposition of hands from him, according to general and current practice. See note [before any submission, &c.] in epist. 15.

^a Suffrage of Nicomedes of Segermæ.] This was a city of Numidia *Byzacena*. *Augustin* opposes to this suffrage, the opinion and the practice of the catholick church; and saith, as before, that upon this principle sinners in the church, when they receive their baptism in a state of guilt, would as much need to be re-baptized, as sinners out of it.

^b The suffrage of Monnulus of Girba.] Girba was a city in an island belonging to Tripoly. *Augustin* answers this, by saying, that they have the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the sacrament, who are baptized with due form and matter; and as to having Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in their hearts; they, who are not sincere in their baptismal professions, have him no more there, than hereticks and schismatics have; so that if the one be re-baptized, the other should be.

^c Baptism and the trine immersion.] In baptismis Trinitate. Antiently (as *Tertullian* informs us *de Coron. Mil. ch. 3. & adv. Prax. ch. 26.*) the persons baptized were three times dip't, once at each name; of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; tho' he resolves this practice into ecclesiastical tradition, rather than divine institution.

^d Canker may be cured.] In suffrage I. it had been said, that the words of an heretical baptizer would eat as a canker.

A. D. 256.

XI.

The suffrage of
* Secundinus
of Cedis.

Matt. 12. 30.

John 18. 19.

Our Lord Christ having pronounced of such as were *not with him*, that they were *against him*; and the apostle St. John having called those *antichrists, who go out from the church*; it must needs follow, that such as are *against Christ*, such as are termed *antichrists*, can never confer the benefits of a saving baptism. Wherefore my opinion is, that such as would take sanctuary in the church, from the dangerous errors of heresy, should be baptized by us, who, thro' the singular vouchsafement of God to us, are called his friends.

XII.

The suffrage of
† Felix of Ba-
gai.

Matt. 15. 14.

As if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a ditch; so if one heretick baptize another, both will fall into the snare of death. And therefore an heretick is to be baptized and quickened, lest we, who are *living*, should promiscuously join in communion with such as (in a spiritual sense) are *dead*.

XIII.

The suffrage of
‡ Pollianus of
Mileum.

It is very fit that an heretick should receive baptism in the church of Christ.

XIV.

The suffrage of
§ Theogenes
of Hippo Re-
gius.

Ephes. 4. 5.

According to the tenour of that doctrine, which we received from above, through the special favour of God; we believe *one only baptism*, which is in the holy church.

XV.

The suffrage of
¶ Dativus of
Badis.

We desire, by all means in our power, to avoid communion with hereticks, except they be baptized in the church, and so receive the remission of their sins.

XVI.

The suffrage of
* Abbit Ger-
manicana.

Either hereticks have the whole power in this affair, or they have none at all. If they have the power to baptize, they have likewise power to give the Holy

* Secundinus of Cedis.] This *Augustin* hath called *Chezias*, and (as bishop *Fell* hath conjectured) may very probably mean the city of *Mauritania*, which in the *Notitia Africa* is entitled *Quidias*. The argument of this is answered by *Augustin* in his old manner, by saying, that all bad men are enemies to Christ; and yet they (as our Lord foretold of them, *Matt. 7. 22.*) would do many things in his name. Now (saith he) if to have valid baptism it be necessary for a man to be baptized by such as are really friends to God, those who have been baptized in the church by ill men, who are his enemies, ought to be re-baptized by good men, who are his friends.

† Felix of Bagai.] This was a city of *Numidia* (saith bishop *Fell*) where the *Donatists* held afterwards a famous council, consisting of 310 bishops. To this *Augustin* answers in the former way, that all ill men in a spiritual sense are *dead*; and yet, if they have been baptized, there is no pretence of making them *alive* again by baptism.

‡ Pollianus of Mileum.] This was likewise a city of *Numidia*, famous (saith bishop *Fell*) for diverse councils held there. *Augustin* replies very briefly to this brief suffrage; that it was not fit the baptism of Christ should be blown away in the church of Christ.

§ Theogenes of Hippo Regius.] This was *Augustin*'s own (see afterwards, a city of *Numidia*, distant (saith bishop *Fell*, from *Antoninus*) 218 miles from *Carthage*. *Regius* was added to distinguish it from another place of the same name, and called *Diarrhisus*, (as in suffrage lxxii.) The former is now called *Rema*. *Augustin* says, he will not contradict this suffrage, because he too believes *one baptism, which is in the holy church*; but then he insists that 'tis not there *only*; and for this he refers himself to his other answers.

¶ Dativus of Badis.] A city of *Numidia*, *Augustin* answers here, that he should avoid communion with all wicked men, as well as with hereticks, which yet is nothing to the rebaptizing them. He saith, 'tis well added by all means in our power; because 'twas well known, that many dissented from this opinion, which yet proved no breach of communion with such as held it.

* Abbit Germanicana.] This was a city of *Africa*, in its more restrained signification, as distinct from *Numidia* and *Mauritania*. Concerning which see note on the opening of the *Session Africa*. *Augustin* answers in his old way, by exchanging hereticks for ill men. Thus either murderers have the whole power in this affair, or they have none at all, &c. Now (saith he) *Cyprian* knew *others* murderers

Holy Ghost. If they cannot give the Holy Ghost, because they have it not, A. D. 256. then neither can they give a truly spiritual baptism; upon all which considerations, I am of opinion, that hereticks ought to be baptized.

XVII.

Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, the Son of God the Father our creator, built his church upon a rock, and not ^m upon sand; and gave the power of baptizing to bishops, and not to hereticks: Wherefore they who are out of his church, and set themselves in opposition to Christ, dispersing and scattering the sheep of his pasture, have no power to baptize out of his fold. The suffrage of Fortunatus of Thuccaboris.

XVIII.

Just as much as the water, which is consecrated in the church by the prayer of the bishop, washeth away sins; so much doth it add to them, when it is fouled and polluted by the mouth of hereticks, which spreads its infection like a canker: Wherefore, as far as we can proceed in this matter ^o without breach of peace, we should use our best endeavours, that no one, who hath been tainted with heretical errors, and thence received his baptism, should decline receiving the one only true baptism of the church; which whosoever doth not receive, shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven. The suffrage of Sedalus of Thuburbo.

XIX.

He who undertakes to say, that hereticks have power to baptize, should tell us who is the author and founder of heresy: If God was its author and founder; then indeed we may well and fitly suppose his mercies entailed upon it; but if God was not so; whence should it derive his grace and favour either upon it self, or others? The suffrage of Privatianus of Sufetula.

XX.

What, I beseech you, is at last the difference between communicating with hereticks, and allowing the validity of their baptisms? The suffrage of Privatus of Sufi.

within the church, who yet baptized, and their baptisms were accounted valid; for (according to St. John, 1 Ep. 3. 15.) *Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer.* And divers such Cyprian too well knew.

¹ Thuccaboris.] A city of Africa in its narrower acceptation. Here, again, instead of hereticks, *Augustin* puts wicked men; and saith, that Jesus Christ gave his power to bishops, and not to wicked men: That if baptism could not be received out of the church, it could not be retained out of it, which yet it manifestly and confessedly was.

^m Upon sand.] So *Augustin* reads it; but other copies now read, upon heresy.

ⁿ Thuburbo.] Or *Thuburbis*, as it is in *Pliny*, was a city of the African province. To this *Augustin* answers, that many in the church, as well as out of it, would be defrauded of valid baptism, if the faultiness of the words used in the administration of it were allowed to null it; But he thinks, that if the essential words be retained, the use of any other, which hereticks, or unskilful pronouncers of the received form, should add, either by mistake or design, would not defeat the efficacy of such as were essential. What were essential, I suppose, were only these; *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and Holy Ghost.* By the way, from *Augustin's* whole argument in this reply, 'tis apparent, that forms of prayer were used at this office, which were not composed by the administrator of it.

^o Without breach of peace.] This was agreeable to what our author had recommended to them at opening the session, not to determine too peremptorily, nor to censure those who allowed the validity of heretical baptisms; which shews (as I have observed) that it was considered by this council, as a prudential, rather than as an essential point, and belonged more properly to the head of discipline, which was discretionary, and more or less severe, as times would bear, or occasions persuade, than to the head of doctrine; which was fixed and unchangeable, and the church had no power to give up a title of it.

^p Sufetula.] A city of Numidia *Dynaceus*, as bishop *Fell* hath observed from *Antoninus*. Here again *Augustin* answers, by putting wicked men in the church, into the place of hereticks out of it; and by observing, that the argument holds as well against the validity of the one, as of the other, administration.

^q Sufi.] A city of the same province with the precedings; and the answer to this is the same with that to the preceding suffrage. The baptism (*Augustin* saith) is not the heretical administrator's, but Christ's.

A. D. 256.

XXI.

The suffrage
of Hortensius
of Lares.

How many baptisms there may be, is a question which I shall leave to be answered, by the presumptuous usurpers themselves, or by their secret abettors: We claim for the church the privilege of *one baptism*, and acknowledge none which are not celebrated in it; for how, I would ask, can they baptize in the name of Christ, whom Christ himself hath declared to be his enemies?

XXII.

The suffrage
of Callius of
Macomadae.

Since there cannot be two baptisms, he who allows the baptism of hereticks, must, in plain consequence, disannul and make void his own: Wherefore my opinion is, that hereticks should be recovered out of their desperate and lamentable condition, by receiving the baptism of the church, when they come over to it. And thus when washed with the sacred laver, and enlightened with the light of life; they should be admitted into the church, no longer now as enemies, but as persons reconciled to it; not as aliens, but as appertaining to the household of faith; not as bastards, but as the genuine sons of God, as being become heirs of salvation, instead of children of error. Yet I make an exception for such as have been seduced out of the church, and thence misled into the darkness of heresy; since it may be sufficient to restore these by imposition of hands only.

XXIII.

The suffrage
of another Januarius
of Caesar's
Town.

If error will not come into the truth, much less should the truth subscribe to error. We, therefore, who preside in the church as governours, stand up in her defence, and claim for her the sole privilege of baptism, exclusive of all other pretensions; and accordingly we baptize those, who have not received their baptism in the church.

XXIV.

The suffrage
of another Secundinus
of Carpi.

Matt. 12. 30.

Are hereticks christians, or not? If they are christians, why are they not in the church of Christ? If they are not christians, how is it possible they should make any others christians? Or how shall we interpret that saying of our Lord's; *He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth?* From whence I think it to be clear and evident, that the Holy Ghost cannot descend upon strange children, the generation of antichrist, thro' mere imposition of hands, since it is apparent that hereticks, have no true baptism.

XXV.

The suffrage
of Victorinus
of Thabacra.

If hereticks can baptize, and confer the remission of sins; why do we defame them with the ugly reproachful name of hereticks?

[Lares.] A city of Numidia, distant (saith bishop Fell) 117 miles from Carthage. This suffrage is likewise answered by *Augustin* in the same manner with the two preceding ones.

[Macomadae.] If this was that among the several *Macomadae*, which was called *Rusticiana*, as bishop *Fell* supposes it; we must take his observation along with us a little farther, and add, as he doth, that the *Novatians* first, and after them the *Donatists*, vied with the church, as in other things, so also in the number of their bishops; which forced the church upon encreasing her own bishops; and of placing them sometimes in her larger villages, though her original rule was confining them to cities. *Augustin* answers this suffrage as he had done the three preceding.

[Caesar's town.] A city of Numidia. This *Augustin* answers, as he had done the former.

[Carpi.] A city of the African province, bordering upon *Tunis*, saith bishop *Fell*, from *Pliny* and *Ptolemy*. If they are not christians, how is it possible they should make others so? *Augustin* read this somewhat otherwise from his copy, viz. *If they are not christians, let them be made so*. This suffrage he answers as he had done the preceding ones; by putting wicked men in the place of hereticks, and then by shewing how it would follow from his adversaries argument, that they ought to be baptized as well as hereticks.

[Thabacra.] A city of Numidia, called (saith bishop *Fell*) by *Ptolemy*, *Thabraca colonia*. This is answered by *Augustin*, like the preceding suffrages.

XXVI. It

XXVI.

A. D. 256.

It is most certain, my venerable colleagues, that the presumptuous usurpation of men, hath not equal efficacy with the adorable majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore in regard to the terrible consequences of these unauthorized actions, we ought not only to observe it as a rule to our selves, but to give it moreover all the farther weight we can by our solemn determination; that all hereticks, who would be received into the bosom of the church, be first baptized; that so the mind, which hath been a great while polluted with the filth of heresy, may be cleansed and sanctified by the laver of baptism, and so a reformation may regularly proceed upon this beginning.

The suffrage
of another
Felix of
Uthina.

XXVII.

We, who profess to live by faith, should be very diligent in paying all punctual obedience to those things which have been foretold for our instruction. Now we find it written in a book of Solomon's; *He that is washed by a dead person, if he touch the dead again, what availeth his washing?* In which words we have a clear and strong allusion to the case of those who are baptized by hereticks, and also of those who are the baptizers. For if they who are baptized by such, be thence entitled to the remission of their sins, and to immortal life; what occasion is there for their coming into the church afterwards? But now if it be (as we apprehend it) impossible to receive any advantage from a dead person; and therefore they who are come to a sense of their error in this particular, are desirous of returning to the right and true way, by penitential submissions; they should certainly be regenerated by that one life-giving baptism, which is only to be found in the catholick church.

The suffrage
of Quietus of
Buruch.
Ecclesi 34. 25.

XXVIII.

He, who prefers custom before truth, and common usage before the reason of things; gives just ground of suspicion, that either he hath envy and malice in his heart against his brethren, to whom such truth is revealed; or else that he is regardless of the mercies of God, by whose gracious inspiration his church is continually directed.

The suffrage
of Castus of
Sicca.

XXIX.

Our Lord and God, Christ Jesus, hath given a full direction to the practice of his church, and to what we should believe in this matter; and hath settled the

The suffrage
of Eucherius
of Thénæ.

[Uthina.] A city of the African province. *Augustin* hath nothing new in his answer to this suffrage, only upon the words, *who have been a great while polluted*, he criticizes a little, and asks, if they had been polluted but a little while, whether then their baptism would have been accounted more valid, or not?

[Buruch.] A city of Numidia; as bishop *Fell* observes from *Ptolemy*. There is nothing in *Augustin's* answer to this, but what we have had before.

[Washed by a dead person.] *Baptizatur a mortuo*. And in the LXX, *Βαπτίζεται ἀπὸ νεκροῦ*. Which alludes without doubt in its original meaning to *Numb.* 19. 11. where he that toucheth the dead body of any man is declared unclean for seven days, and directed to purify himself the third day at 9. 12. But here it should seem that *Quintus* understood the text of *Ecclesiasticus* in its more literal construction; as if its author had meant, *He that is washed by a dead man, &c.* whereas the meaning was, *He that is washed after touching a corpse, &c.* However we are not concerned, whether his interpretation of the text, or his inferences from it, were right or wrong. 'Tis his conclusion only, which is to us significant, whatsoever premises he might use to come at it. See this text cited again and noted in *epist.* 71. §. 1.

[Sicca.] A city in the African province. *Augustin* turns this upon his adversaries the *Donatists*; and saith, that if it were the custom to allow the baptism of hereticks; either this custom was right, or else it must be allowed, that evil men do not defile the good by joining in communion with them. By the way; this bishop allows the custom to have been against him, at least till the synod, held some time before by *Agrippinus* (one of *Cyprian's* predecessors) upon this occasion, had made a change in it. As to departing from truth and reason to follow custom, this *Augustin* saith, would be a terrible charge if it were made good. But bishop *Castus*, he adds, hath given no proof in support of what he calls truth and reason.

[Thénæ.] A city of Numidia. *Augustin* saith to this, that if the baptism were not celebrated in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, he would consent it should pass for heretical, and void. But

A. D. 256. the grace of baptism in its proper channel, by that commission which his apostles received from him, saying; *Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* For hence, I think, it clearly follows, that the baptism of hereticks is presumptuous and false, unfit to be received or acknowledged by us, and a just object of our abhorrence and detestation; since out of their mouth proceeds, what ^dinstead of giving life, is fatal to it; what instead of conferring the grace of God, doth really and truly ^eblaspheme the whole Trinity. To me 'tis therefore evident, that such hereticks as would come into the church, ought to be let into it by the one catholick and perfect baptism; that so they may be cleansed from the guilt of their blasphemy and presumption, and renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

XXX.

The suffrage of
Libolus of
Vaga.
John 14. 6.

Our Lord in the gospel hath declared, saying, *I am the truth*; he said not, *I am custom.* Wherefore when *truth* appears, let all pretences from *custom* yield to it; so that if any heretofore have received hereticks into the church of Christ without baptizing them, let them now at least begin to receive them by baptizing them.

XXXI.

The suffrage of
Lucius of
Thebeste.

My opinion is, that those blasphemous and presumptuous hereticks, who mangle and abuse the venerable words of scripture, and artfully change the sense of it, ought to be held in the utmost abhorrence, and therefore should be exorcised first, and then baptized.

XXXII.

The suffrage of
Eugenius of
Ammedera.

My opinion is the same, that hereticks ought to be baptized.

XXXIII.

The suffrage of
another Felix
of Amacura.

I have also the same sentiments; founded, as I apprehend, upon the authority of holy scripture; from whence I not only contend, that *hereticks* ought to be baptized, but that *such* also should receive their baptism in the church, as pretend to have received it among *schismaticks*. For if (according to Christ's directions) our *fountain be enclosed* for particular and private uses,

1st Cant. 4. 12.

if that *fountain* were held in its proper estimation, he thinks the error of the hereticks, who used it, should be distinguished from it; and what was right in them, should be received and acknowledged; and what was wrong, should be amended.

^d Instead of giving life.] Which the author and giver of life was supposed to do in every regular baptism.

^e Blaspheme the whole Trinity.] Here the word is apparently applied to the three persons in the blessed Deity; as it is likewise in §. 21. of our author's tract upon the Lord's prayer. Tertullian's whole book against Praxeas bears abundant testimony to the *inseparability* or consubstantial doctrine; and particularly in his 2^d chapter, he mentions that *mystical economy, which branches out the unity of the divine substance into a Trinity of persons.* *Custodiatur singulorum sacramentum, quæ unitatem in Trinitatem disponit, tres dirigens, Patrem, & Filium, & Spiritum sanctum. Tres autem non status, sed gradus; nec substantiæ, sed formæ; nec potestate, sed specie; unius autem substantiæ, & unius status, & unius potestatis; quia unus Deus, ex quo & gradus isti, & formæ, & species, in nomine Patris, & Filii, & Spiritus sancti deputantur.* See note on §. 5. of the unity of the church. [These three are one.]

^f Vaga.] A city of Numidia. This Augustin answers as he had done the 28th suffrage, where custom had been mentioned, with some note of allowance, that it had formerly run against the determinations of this council.

^g Thebeste.] A city of Numidia. Augustin agrees, that they ought to be held in abhorrence; but denies, that they ought to be exorcised or baptized. (Where note, that the exorcism was an usual preliminary, a circumstance preparatory to baptism) For though (saith he) *I abhor their heresy, which is properly their own; yet I revere their baptism, which is properly Christ's.*

^h Ammedera.] A city of Numidia (saith Bp. Fall, from Ptolemy and Antoninus) distant 25 miles from Thebeste. To this opinion Augustin opposes that of a general council after it.

ⁱ Amacura.] A city of the same. This Augustin answers in his old way, by putting the case of wicked givers or receivers within the church. He agrees that the receiver of baptism out of the church can have no benefit, but by returning to it; though then he thinks the baptism will be available, which he received out of it, without repeating it.

^k Cant. 4. 12.] Observe here the application of this book, so early as from our author's days, to Christ and his church.

all

all the adversaries of our church should hence take notice, that¹ foreigners and strangers can have nothing to do with it. Nor can the pastor of one flock, give effectual and saving baptism to two different sorts of people, belonging each to a different fold. Wherefore to me it is manifest, that neither hereticks nor schismaticks are capable of the^m heavenly gift, who have been so presumptuous as to expect it from men, who are sinners, and aliens from the church. If the giver hath no title to give, the receiver can reap no benefit from receiving. A. D. 256.
Hebr. 6. 4.

XXXIV.

It is strange to me, that all should acknowledge there is but one baptism, and yet that any should disagree about the nature of its unity; for the church and heresy are two things entirely different from each other: Wherefore, if hereticks have, indeed, the one true baptism, we have it not; as, on the other hand, if we have it, they cannot have it. Now there is no manner of doubt, that the church alone, which alone hath the grace of Christ, and the truth of his doctrine, hath his baptism likewise in it. The suffrage of another Januarius of a Muzuli.

XXXV.

It is an invidious and groundless charge of our adversaries upon us, to say we re-baptize any; since the church doth not, indeed, re-baptize, but baptize hereticks. The suffrage of Adelphius of Thasbalte.

XXXVI.

We stand up in defence of one only baptism, which we claim for the catholick church alone, as her peculiar privilege: But now such as say, that hereticks may lawfully and truly baptize, are really the persons who make not one only, but many baptisms. And as there are many forms, and various shapes of heresy, there will, at this rate of reckoning, be as many baptisms. The suffrage of Demetrius of Leptiminus.

XXXVII.

We are well assured that hereticks are worse than heathens; wherefore, if they are brought to a sense of their wretched state, and have a mind to come The suffrage of Vincentius of Thibaris.

¹ Foreigners and strangers can have nothing to do with it.] I cannot make sense of the words as they stand in Bp. Fell's edition. *Intelligant canitici ecclesia nostra adversarij, quia alieni sunt, nobiscum esse non possunt.* Wherefore I follow the reading of Rigaltius, *quia alienis esse non possunt.* Which is supported by Augustin's copy, who read this passage in the same manner. N. B. Rigaltius would read instead of *alienis, alienus*, so making *alienus* to correspond with the preceding *sons noster*. And some copies of Augustin favour this reading; the sense of which cannot, however, be thought very different from that which I have given in this translation.

^m Heavenly gift.] *Viz.* The benefits entailed upon baptism.

ⁿ Muzuli.] Bishop Fell conjectures this to be that *Maxula*, or *Muzula*, which was a city in *Numidia*. The baptism of wicked men is here again the refuge of Augustin, in answer to this suffrage; which, saith he, is a baptism very different from that of good ones, and yet destroys not its unity.

^o Thasbalte.] A city of the *Byzacene Numidia*. To this Augustin only saith, that the church of his time did not indeed re-baptize, because she baptized such only as were not baptized before; which was anciently her custom, and had been since confirmed by the authority of a council.

^p Doth not, indeed, re-baptize.] Because she doth not acknowledge, that they were baptized, or had any baptism which was of the least account before.

^q Leptiminus.] So called (saith bishop Fell) to distinguish it from *Leptis magna*, which was in the *Tripolitan* province of *Numidia*; whereas this was in the *Byzacene*, about 100 miles distant from *Carthage*. Augustin says, that the baptisms administered by different species of sinners, will make as many baptisms as different heresies will make.

^r Not one only.] N. B. Some editions of Augustin's copy read this, *not only two, but many baptisms.*

^s Thibaris.] Bishop Fell conjectures this to be that *Tabora*, which the *Notitia Africa* tells us was a city of *Mauritania*. Augustin saith to this suffrage, that he knows not by what rule an heretick is worse than an heathen; since our Lord only says of such, that they should be to us as heathens. *Matt. 18. 17.* And yet what heathens themselves had good in them; was not to be censured as good for nothing, though it would not avail them till they came into the church: When our Lord reproached the Jews, and told them it would be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, in the day of judgment, than for them (*Matt. 10. 15.*) he did not therefore reject their sacraments: That by going out of the church, the baptism received in it, is not forfeited; and it might as well (he thinks) be received, as retained out of the church.

A. D. 256. over to Christ their Lord; we have an unerring rule to proceed by, which our Lord himself gave in charge to his apostles, saying; Go ye and lay on your hands in my name, and *cast out devils*. And elsewhere; *Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. So that we see, they may be admitted to a participation of Christ's promises; first by imposition of hands in their exorcism, and afterwards by the laver of regeneration in their baptism; and I know no other lawful way of their being admitted.

XXXVIII.

The suffrage
of Marcus of
Maftaris.

It is not strange, that hereticks, who are enemies to the truth, and its avowed opponents, should claim to themselves prerogatives and powers which no way appertain to them, and belong to others; but it is truly wonderful, that any of our own people should so far betray the truth, and the trust reposed in them, as to strike in with hereticks, and to join with them against their christian brethren: Wherefore my opinion is, upon the whole, that hereticks should be received into the church by baptism.

XXXIX.

The suffrage
of Satus of
Sicilibba.

If hereticks receive the remission of sins in their baptism, there can be no occasion for their coming over to the church. For since there is nothing punished in the day of judgment, but sin only; they can have nothing to fear from the judgment of Christ, who have already obtained the remission of their sins.

XL.

The suffrage
of Victor of
Gor.

Since there is no remission of sins to be had, but in the baptism of the church; he who receives an heretick to communion without true baptism, commits two great absurdities; for he defiles the christian, and yet cleanses not the heretick.

XLI.

The suffrage
of Aurelius of
Ulica.
Tim. 5. 22.

The apostle hath warned us not to be *partakers of other men's sins*; but now what doth he less than partaking of other mens sins, who joins in communion with hereticks, without insisting upon their being baptized with the baptism of the church? Wherefore my sentence is, that hereticks be baptized in order to the forgiveness of their sins, and be so admitted to communion.

XLII.

The suffrage
of Confessor
Jambus of
Germanici-
ana.

They who *approve* the baptism of hereticks, do, in effect and consequence, disapprove of ours; for thus much is plainly, I think, implied in their

[Maftaris.] A city of *Numidia Byzacena*. This argument *Augustin* turns upon the *Donatists*, and says, that they are as criminal in allowing the baptisms derived from those whom *Marcus* here calls betrayers of the truth, and of the trust reposed in them; as the catholicks were in allowing the baptisms derived from those whom the *Donatists* called *Traditors*, because it was suggested against them, that they had delivered up their bibles in the time of persecution. *Aug. b. 7. De baptis.*

[Sicilibba.] A city of *Africa Zeugitana*. To this *Augustin* answers, that hereticks, as well as men whose wicked lives unqualified them, might receive true baptism, and yet not receive the remission of their sins with it.

[Gor.] A city of *Mauritania*. To this *Augustin* answers; that baptism might be amongst hereticks, as the water of paradise was supposed to be in the land of *Egypt*, and yet *Egypt* was not in paradise: That as to defiling christians by admitting hereticks to communion without baptism, *Cyprian* himself did not think so: For though he was against such admissions, yet he thought that communion might safely be maintained with such as did admit them.

[Ulica.] A city of *Africa Zeugitana*, famous for the death of *Cato*. To this *Augustin* replies as before, that *Cyprian* himself, according to this doctrine, was a partaker of other mens sins; inasmuch as he communicated with those, who held the validity of heretical baptisms; and that there was no more occasion for baptizing them over again, than for baptizing over again those who were personally disqualified by their vices from receiving the remission of their sins at their baptism in the church.

[Germanicana.] *Nova* should be added, to distinguish it from that in the 16th suffrage of the same name, and called *Abbir*. This *Nova* was a city of *Numidia Byzacena*. (Bishop Fell.) *Augustin* answers to

their saying, that they who are (not so properly indeed *washed*, as) *defiled* A. D. 256.
by being washed, *out* of the church, should not, or need not, be baptized
in it.

XLIII.

We find it written; *God saw the light, that it was good, and he divided* The suffrage
of Lucianus
of Rucuma.
Genes. 1. 4.
the light from the darkness: Now if light and darkness can agree, then in-
deed there may be some hope of communion between us and hereticks; wherefore my opinion is, that hereticks ought to be baptized.

XLIV.

We read thus in holy scripture; *Either the Lord is your God, or else* The suffrage
of Pelagianus
of Luperciana.
1 Kings 18. 21.
baal is: So we may now put much the same *dilemma*; Either the church is
our church, or else heresy is so. But if heresy be not so; how can the bap-
tism of the church be expected amongst hereticks?

XLV.

We are sure, there is but one baptism in the catholick church; and there-
fore we ought not to receive an heretick into it without baptizing him, lest
he should think himself baptized out of the catholick church. The suffrage
of the confessor
and martyr
Jader of
Midila.

XLVI.

There is but one faith, and one baptism; which is only to be had in the
catholick church, and there is no other baptism lawful but that. The suffrage
of another
Felix of
Marazana.

XLVII.

I am not at all surprized, with finding, that some are not steady in de-
fending the faith of the church, nor in vindicating the truth which is lodged
with it; since the apostle hath said; *What if some of them have fallen from* The suffrage
of confessor
Paulus of
Bobba.
Rom. 3. 3, 4.
the faith? Hath their unbelief made the faith of God without effect? God
forbid! For God is true, and every man a liar! Now if God is true, how
can true baptism be amongst hereticks, where God himself is not?

XLVIII.

To me it is past all controversy, that hereticks cannot baptize, nor confer
the forgiveness of sins; as having no power given them to loose or bind any
thing upon earth. The suffrage
of confessor
Pomponius
of Dionysiana.

XLIX.

Let us put the case of some husband going a long journey, and recom-
mending his wife to the care of some special friend in his absence; surely that
The suffrage
of confessor
Venantius of
Tinisa.

to this, that no body in the church did *approve* the baptism of hereticks, which was not theirs indeed
but Christ's; and received its validity from *him*, and not from *them*. Which was the case, when ad-
minister'd by, or to, wicked livers.

^a Rucuma.] A city of *Africa Zeugitana*. *Augustin* here betakes to his old resort, of putting good
and evil men, instead of hereticks and members of the church.

^b Luperciana.] This bishop *Fell* conjectures to be that *Lubertina*, of which there is mention in *Collat.*
Carthag. This *Augustin* answers, as he had done the 40th suffrage; adding to it the case of ill men,
which he had so often before resorted to.

^c Midila.] A city of *Numidia*. This *Augustin* answers by putting again the case of wicked livers.

^d Marazana.] A city of *Numidia Byzacena*. What if another should put (saith *Augustin*) *just men*
instead of the *catholick church*; would it therefore be true, that none but they might give or receive
a valid baptism?

^e Bobba.] *Obba* in *Augustin*; who saith here, as before, that God is no more among wicked men,
than he is amongst hereticks.

^f Rom. 3. 3, 4.] Observe the little variations of the reading this passage by these *African* bishops, from
what doth commonly at this time obtain.

^g Dionysiana.] A city of *Numidia Byzacena*. This is also answered in the same way with the pre-
ceding suffrage: For (saith *Augustin*) it was never said to murderers, *whose sins ye remit, &c.*

^h Tinisa.] A city of *Africa Zeugitana*. This is answered as the former two suffrages were. So is
the next of *Aymnius*.

A. D. 256. friend would take all the care of her in his power, to preserve her from all corruption: This is now with us a case of fact; Christ our Lord and God going to his Father, hath recommended to us the care of his spouse: The question then is, which we will chuse to do; whether to preserve her pure and undefiled; or prostitute her to the pollution of whoremongers and adulterers? Now he, who throws open the enclosure of his baptism, and lays it in common with the church of Christ and with hereticks, doth in effect betray the spouse of Christ to be corrupted by adulterers.

L.

The suffrage of
Aymnius of
Aulaga.

As we have received but one baptism, so we abide by that, and use and allow no other. But now he who saith, that hereticks can baptize, makes two baptisms:

LI.

The suffrage of
Saturninus of
Victoriana.

If hereticks can administer lawful baptism, then they seem to stand excused and vindicated, who do what is ^k unlawful for them. Nor do I then see indeed upon what grounds Christ should have called them his adversaries, or his apostles after him should have stigmatized them as antichrists.

LII.

The suffrage of
another Saturninus
confessor of Thucca.

Although the *Gentiles* are worshippers of idols, yet do they acknowledge the ^m supreme God, the Father and creator of all things. Now ⁿ Marcion blasphemes this supreme God, and yet some are not ashamed to allow even Marcion's baptism. But then in what manner do those priests either maintain or vindicate the honour of their function, who do not baptize the enemies of God, but admit them to communion without it?

LIII.

The suffrage of
Marcellus of
Zama.

Since we are agreed that sins are not remitted, save only in the baptism of the church; he who doth not baptize an heretick, doth evidently hold communion with a sinner.

LIV.

The suffrage of
confessor Ireneus
of P. Ululi.

If the church doth not baptize an heretick from this suggestion, that he is baptized already; his heresy thence is so much the greater.

^a Aulaga.] A city of the same province. Bishop Tell.
^b Victoriana.] A city of Numidia Byzacena. This is answered as before: God saith to such as hate instruction; What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? And yet though such were blameable for administering God's word; their ministrations were not void: 'T was unlawful for them to do it; yet what was done was valid.

^c Unlawful.] *illicita facientes*. Perhaps *illicita* should be *licita*; and so *unlawful* should be translated *lawful*: But this I leave as a meer conjecture, there being no copies to bear me out in it.

^d Thucca.] A city of Numidia. To this Augustin saith, that as for communicating, Cyprian and his colleagues, in effect, did it, because they were not for breaking communion with such as acknowledged the validity of heretical baptisms. So that this suffrage went too far to conclude any thing.

^e Supreme God.] Observe the acknowledgement here made, that the *Gentile* idolatry did not exclude the supreme being from its worship, but only communicated it to improper partners. The supreme being they still acknowledged as such, the Father of Gods and men, as Homer styled him.

^f Marcion blasphemes.] *Viz.* By asserting, as he did, that the God of christians was not the same with the God of the Jews; and that the new testament exhibited a different deity from the old one.

^g Zama.] A city of Numidia. What is here said of holding communion with a sinner, Augustin answers as he had done in the preceding suffrage; that Cyprian and his colleagues did it, and professed to do it in the opening of their session.

^h P. Ululi.] A city of Numidia Byzacena. Augustin answers this, by putting the case of a covetous man, and saying, if he be not baptized again, from this suggestion, that he is baptized already, his covetousness is so much the greater. If Augustin had not answered in this manner, I should have doubted to whom the words, *heresi major est*, belonged; whether to the church or to the person of the heretick.

A. D. 256.

LV.

I, for my part, can acknowledge but one church, and one only baptism: Wherefore if any one will pretend that the grace of baptism is to be found amongst hereticks; he first should prove, that they have the church amongst them.

*The suffrage of
Donatus of
Cybaliana.*

LVI.

When the truth comes once to be discovered, let error yield to it: Thus Peter, who circumcised before, yet, yielded to Paul, who convinced him of the truth.

*The suffrage of
Zotimus of
Tharassa.
Galar. 2. 14.*

LVII.

It is written; *A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.* If heresy, therefore, be from heaven, it may confer true baptism.

*The suffrage of
Julianus of
Telepte.
John 3. 27.*

LVIII.

Let no man, who abets the cause of hereticks, flatter himself. He who in favour to them, opposeth the baptism of the church, makes them christians, and us hereticks.

*The suffrage of
confessor Fau-
stus of Ti-
mida Regia.*

LIX.

Though some of our colleagues may, if they please, give away their own privilege, yet we cannot consent that they should dispose of ours, by preferring hereticks before us, as they do before themselves: And therefore I am for abiding by our former sentence, and for baptizing those who come over to us from hereticks.

*The suffrage of
Geminus of
Furni.*

LX.

Christ was the founder of the church, as the devil was of heresy. How then can the synagogue of satan be entitled to the baptism of Christ?

*The suffrage of
Roganianus of
Nova.*

LXI.

He who betrays and gives up the baptism of the church to hereticks, is little better than a Judas to the spouse of Christ.

*The suffrage of
confessor The-
rapius of
Bulla.*

^a Cybaliana.] A city of Numidia Byzacena, probably (saith Bp. Fell) that which in the Nothia Africa is styled *Cirbaliana*. Augustin answers this by saying, that hereticks, as evil men, may have the sacrament it self, though not the grace of it; and that though good and wicked men have not one hope, yet they may have, and have, one baptism.

^b Tharassa.] A city of Numidia. This Augustin turns upon its author, and saith, that in his time the truth was discovered and subscribed to, and confirmed by a general council, and therefore error should yield to it: And from St. Peter's error here mentioned, that Cyprian need not be ashamed of erring after so great an apostle.

^c Telepte.] A city of Numidia Byzacena. This is answered in the old way, by putting wickedness instead of heresy; and asking, if one be more than the other entitled to an heavenly original.

^d Timida Regia.] A city of Africa Zeugitana. This is answered by putting the same case as in the former.

^e Opposeth.] The construction was, that one or other baptism was a nullity; if that of hereticks was valid, that of the church was null.

^f Furni.] A city of the same. And this suffrage is answered in the same manner with the two preceding by Augustin.

^g Nova.] A city of Mauritania. This is still answered in the same way.

^h Bulla.] A city of Africa Zeugitana. Augustin answers this as he had done the preceding suffrages; and adds, that Cyprian was for communicating with those who are here called Judas's; and therefore turns it upon the Donatists, that they ought not to withdraw their communion from the persons whom they called Traditors.

LXII. It

XXI

A. D. 256.

The suffrage
of another
Lucius,
confessor of
y Membresia.
John 9. 31.

LXII.

It is written; *God heareth not sinners*. How then can an heretick, who is confessedly a sinner, be heard, when he is celebrating the ordinance of baptism?

LXIII.

The suffrage
of another
Felix of
Bullacene.

In the case of admitting hereticks into the church, without giving them her baptism, let no man prefer custom before truth and reason; because truth and reason should always over bear any opposite custom.

LXIV.

The suffrage
of another
Saturninus of
Avitini.

If antichrist can in any case confer the grace of Christ; then indeed may hereticks baptize, who are called antichrists.

LXV.

The suffrage
of Quintus of
Aggya.

He indeed who hath any thing to give, may give something; but what can hereticks give who have nothing?

LXVI.

The suffrage
of another
Julianus of
Marcelliana.
Matt. 6. 24.

If any man can serve two masters, God and mammon; then, and not otherwise, it may be allowed, that baptism may be serviceable to two sorts of men, the christian and the heretick.

LXVII.

The suffrage
of Tenax of
Horreiscœliae.

There is one baptism, and that belongs to the church only; wherefore there can be no baptism where there is no church.

LXVIII.

The suffrage
of another
Lucius, con-
fessor of
Affuri.

It is written, *There is one God, and one Christ, and one church, and one baptism*. How then can any one pretend to receive baptism, where God and Christ vouchsafe not their presence, and where there is not this one church to receive it in?

LXIX.

The suffrage of
Donatus of
Capfe.

This hath ever been my opinion, that hereticks, who have no title to any thing out of the church, should be baptized when they come into it.

y Membresia.] A city of the same; which bishop Fell conjectures should rather have been written *Momfisa*, about 47 miles from Carthage. 'Tis easy to see that *Augustin* might, as he did answer this, by putting the case of sinners, instead of hereticks.

z Bullacene.] This bishop Fell conjectures should have been written *Byzacene*. *Augustin* replies, that *Felix* here confesses custom to be against him, but gives no proof that truth was for him.

a Avitini.] *Autenti* (bishop Fell conjectures it should be) which was a city of *Numidia Byzacena*. To this *Augustin* answers, as he had done among many others, to the 62^d suffrage.

b Aggya.] *Aggya*, (saith bishop Fell) whereof there is mention in *Collat. Carthag.* *Augustin* replies to this, that hereticks may upon this foot give baptism; because, saith he, when they leave the church, they have it; and it is evident they do not lose it, by departing from the church; because, by the principles and practices of *St. Cyprian* and his followers, such were not re-baptized upon their return into the church.

c Marcelliana.] Of the bishop of this church, there is mention (saith bishop Fell) in the *Notis. Episcopas. Afric.* Here *Augustin* resorts to his old answer, of vicious men, &c.

d Horreiscœliae.] A city of *Numidia Byzacena*; and should probably be written (as bishop Fell conjectures) *Horrea Calia*. *Augustin* answers this by saying, that baptism may as well be where the church is not, as where instead of the rock there is nothing but sand; which is an allusion he frequently makes use of to express wicked men within the church.

e Affuri.] A city of *Africa Zeugitana*. This suffrage is answered just as the former was.

f Capfe.] A city of *Numidia Byzacena*. To this *Augustin* answers, that tho' they have no title to the blessings of the sacrament, yet they may have the sacrament it self, which is common to good men and to bad.

LXX.

An heretick cannot give, what he hath not; much less can a schismatick, who hath lost even what he had.

A. D. 256.
The suffrage
of Verulus
the martyr, of
Ruficade,
concerning
schismaticks.

LXXI.

My late entrance into the episcopal order, hath been the reason, my dear brethren, why I have postponed my suffrage, till I had heard what so many of my seniors would judge in this affair. 'Tis to me apparent, that heresy hath, and can have, no title to any privilege; and therefore it hath been most justly determined, that such as come over from them should be baptized.

The suffrage
of Pudentia-
nus of Cu-
iculum.

LXXII.

Since there is but one baptism, and that in the catholick church; 'tis plain, that, out of it, there can be none. Wherefore my opinion is, that such as have been washed in heresy or schism, should, upon their coming over to the church, be baptized in it.

The suffrage
of Peter the
martyr, of
Hippo Di-
arrhitis.

LXXIII.

I declare the sentiments of my own mind, and, I believe, of the Holy Ghost too; that, as there is one God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Christ, and one hope, and one Spirit, and one church; so there can, and ought to, be but one baptism. Wherefore my opinion is, that, whatever hath been attempted or done by hereticks, ought to be rescinded, and that they, who come over from them, should be baptized in the church.

The suffrage
of another
Lucius of
Ausa.

LXXIV.

My opinion is founded on the authority of holy scripture, that he, who is baptized unlawfully by hereticks out of the church, when he would come over to it, should receive the grace of baptism, where it is lawfully administered.

The suffrage
of another
Felix of
Gurgites.

LXXV.

I am persuaded that there is no saving baptism, but in the catholick church; and that all besides is mere pretence.

The suffrage
of Rufinus of
Lambesa.

LXXVI.

'Tis evident, that hereticks have no title to any privilege; and therefore they come over to us, that they may receive from us, what they had not before.

The suffrage
of Salvianus
the martyr, of
Gazaufala.

LXXVII.

[Ruficade.] A city of Numidia. *Augustin* denies, that an heretick or a schismatick (either) loses what he had: Since the undisputed practice of the church, even of *Cyprian* and his colleagues, allowed the baptism of such as returned to the church, if they had received it in the church before, tho' they afterwards left it.

[Cuculum.] A city of Numidia. This is answered, as the 60th suffrage had been, by *Augustin*. Observe hence, and from suffrage 7, that, tho' the president of the synod reserved his suffrage till the last, yet, the custom of the African church was, for the junior bishops to follow the seniors in their suffrages, and not to precede them.

[Hippo Diarrhitis.] A city of Africa Zeugitana, distinguished by that name from Hippo Regius, (which see in suffrage 14.) This is answered by *Augustin* in the same manner with the 70th suffrage.

[Washed in heresy.] He would not say baptized, because he allowed not such baptisms.

[Ausa.] A city of Africa Zeugitana. This is answered by *Augustin*, as many other suffrages had been, by putting wicked men within the church, instead of hereticks out of it.

[Gurgites.] A city of Numidia Byzacena. This is answered the same way with the foregoing suffrage.

[Lambesa.] A city of Numidia. To this it is said by *Augustin*, as before, that tho' such baptisms were not available to any saving purpose, whilst the parties continued out of the church, yet they might be profitable to them upon their return into it; like the baptism of wicked receivers.

[Gazaufala.] A city of Numidia. *Augustin* saith, that hereticks may have a title to some privilege; tho' they who are the leaders of heresy, and first leave the church for it, would be no hereticks; be-
cause

A.D. 256.

The suffrage of
Honoratus of
P. Tucca.

Since Christ is the truth, we ought rather to follow truth than custom; and therefore should sanctify those hereticks with the baptism of the church, who come over to us, because they are sensible, that out of the church they can receive no spiritual advantage.

LXXVIII.

The suffrage of
Victor of
Ostivum.

You very well know I have not been long a bishop, and therefore I waited for the opinion of my seniors: And I am now accordingly persuaded, that without all doubt they should be baptized, who come over to the church from any heresy.

LXXIX.

The suffrage of
Clarus of
Mascula.

The judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ is clear enough upon this question, who sent his apostles, and gave to them alone the power, which he received from his Father. Now we are their successors, and govern the church of our Lord, in virtue of the same powers which they had, and accordingly we baptize such as profess themselves believers. Wherefore, hereticks, who have no power out of the church, and are not in it, cannot baptize any with the baptism of Christ.

LXXX.

The suffrage of
Secundianus
the martyr of
Thambei.

We ought not to deceive hereticks by any forwardness in granting them an undue privilege; lest, by their not being baptized in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not receiving thence the forgiveness of their sins, they should charge it upon us as our omission, in the day of judgment, that they received not their baptism from us, and so obtained not the remission of their sins. Wherefore, since there is but one church, and one baptism; when such men come over to us; at the same time wherein they are admitted to the church, let them be admitted also to the baptism of the church.

LXXXI.

The suffrage of
another Au-
relus of
Chullabi.
2 John
10. 11.

The apostle St. John hath given us the following direction, in his epistle; *If there come any unto you, and hath not the doctrine of Christ, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him, God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.* And how then can such be admitted

cause it is plain they retain their title to baptism, which is not repeated to them upon their return into the church.

Tucca.] A city of Mauritania. *Augustin* agrees, that they can receive no spiritual benefit out of the church; but saith, that, by their return into it, that may begin to be serviceable, which before was useless to them. He makes his advantage of the confession, that custom was against the practice here contended for.

Ostivum.] A city of Numidia. To this *Augustin* saith, that, since *Victor* followed the judgment of his seniors, the answer which had been given to the one might serve the other. See note on suffrage

71. [Culculum.] A city of Numidia. *Augustin* answers, that, wicked men may be successors to the apostles, and yet do not belong to that rock, which is the church.

Successors.] Observe the assertion here, that the apostolique office, and all the pastoral powers appertaining to it, were designed for continuance in the church of Christ, and that the bishops succeeded to the one and the other.

Thambei.] A city of Numidia Byzacena. *Augustin* replies to this in his old way, that hereticks might have baptism in their heresy, and yet not the remission of their sins with it, like wicked receivers of it in the church.

Chullabi.] Cululi, (saith bishop Fell) a city of Numidia Byzacena. *Augustin* saith, that the quotation from St. John belongeth not to this question; and if it did, *Cyprian* and his followers, by communicating with such, as allowed the baptism of hereticks, were as much offenders against it, as any.

2 John 10. 11.] This I observe is the only instance, which I yet have met with, or which is, indeed, in our author's works, wherein he quotes St. John's second epistle; and whenever he quotes his

ed into the house of God, without great rashness and presumption, as are forbidden admittance into our private houses? Or how can we communicate with those, without baptizing them with the baptism of the church, to whom if we only say *God speed*, we are judged partakers of their evil deeds? A. D. 256.

LXXXII.

If the blind lead the blind, both fall into a ditch. Wherefore, since it is evident, that hereticks cannot enlighten any, as being blind themselves, their baptism cannot be valid. *The suffrage of Lettaeus the confessor of Gemelli. Matt. 15. 14.*

LXXXIII, LXXXIV, LXXXV.

As well I my self who am here present, as *Pompeius of Sabra*, and *Dioga of Leptis magna*, who, though absent in body, yet are present in mind and spirit, and have empowered me to vote for them (we all, I say,) are of the same opinion, with the rest of our colleagues; that hereticks cannot be admitted to communion with us, except they be baptized with the baptism of the church. *The suffrage of Natalis of Ora, with the proxies of Pompeius of Sabra, and Dioga of Leptis magna.*

LXXXVI.

I depart not from the opinion, which hath already received the sanction of a synodical determination; and therefore I am for baptizing such hereticks as come over to the church. *The suffrage of Junius of Neapolis.*

LXXXVII.

The letter which I have written to our colleague *Jubaianus*, doth fully express my thoughts upon this question, viz. That hereticks being called in the gospel, as well as in the epistles, adversaries of Christ, and antichrists, should be baptized with the one only baptism of the church, when they come over to it; that so, from adversaries, they may become friends, and, instead of antichrists, may be entitled christians. *The suffrage of the confessor and martyr Cyprian of Carthage.*

first, he only says (*St. John in his epistle*) without distinguishing it by calling it the first, as usually he does by *St. Paul's* epistles, when he quotes any of them which are double; yet *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in the place quoted from him by *Eusebius*; *Irenaeus* (in b. i. cap. 13.) *Tertullian* (*de Praescript. advers. haer.* cap. 12. & 33.) do all either quote, or allude to it. The same observation I make upon *St. Peter's* second epistle, which is only once quoted, viz. in *epist. 75.* and our author never names his first epistle with any numerical distinction. (See §. 3. and 11. of the 3^d book of testimonies.) And as to the third epistle of *St. John*, he never cites it through his whole works; though *Eusebius* in hist. eccles. lib. 6. c. 14. saith, that *Clemens Alexandrinus* had acknowledged it for canonical in his books of *Hypotyposes*, as well as the 2^d epistle of the same author.

* *Gemelli.*] A city of *Numidia*. This *Augustin* answers as he had done divers other suffrages, by saying, that the baptism of hereticks (like that administered to ill livers) was unavailable, whilst they continued in their heresy, but upon their return into the church might be effectual.

* *Enlighten.*] The emphasis of this word depends, a good deal, upon baptism being often called illumination, *Caluities*.

* *Ora.*] A city of the *Tripolitan* province, as *Sabra* and *Leptis magna* were cities of the same. This is answered by *Augustin* as the former suffrage had been. Observe here, that absent bishops had so long ago their proxies; when any allowable occasion detained them from attending personally. Thus *St. Paul* seems to have given a sort of proxy for himself in a synod of *Achaia*. *1 Cor. 5. 4.* *Bp. Fell.*

* *Neapolis.*] A city of the *Tripolitan* province, as the three former were. *Augustin* makes no reply to this, because *Junius* brings no authority with him of reason or scripture, but only subscribes to his colleagues.

* *Synodical determination.*] This question had indeed been twice before synodically determined. See the introduction to this council.

* *Cyprian of Carthage.*] He, as president of the synod, opened it; and, as such, gave his suffrage last. *Augustin* gives no special answer to this suffrage, but what he had often given before; viz. that bad men, within the church, were as much antichrists and adversaries of Christ, as hereticks; and for the rest, he refers his reader to the answers he had given to *Cyprian's* epistles to *Magnus* and *Jubaianus*, where we shall meet him again, when we come to those epistles.

A DISSERTATION of the Translator upon
the foregoing Council.

It is very unfit to take our leave of this synod abruptly, without staying to make some farther remarks upon it. *Balsamon* and *Zonaras* have observed of it, that it was the eldest of all synods; by which I suppose they meant, of all the synods which were received into the *Greek* canon; tho' then, I think, they should have made some exception for the apostolick canons, which are expressly acknowledged by their sixth council in *Trullo*, *Can. 2.* But as these are rather to be esteem'd collections from several ancient councils, than the work of any one; they might think the council of *Carthage* still entitled to its honour of precedence before any other, which the *Greek* church at that time recognized. Otherwise even the works of *St. Cyprian* plainly shew, that divers were held before it, tho' the acts of them are not so circumstantially transmitted as ours. However both *Balsamon* and *Zonaras* are plainly mistaken, in saying it was held under the reign of *Decius*, who was dead five years before it. But the occasion, whereupon it was assembled, is of more importance to us; and what is extant in the venerable records of antiquity, either favouring or weakening the sentence given by it, may, with great propriety and usefulness, be here presented to the reader. Especially since a dispute in those later days hath been started, tho' by no means the same with this, which our *African* council was called to settle; yet, so near akin to it, that many, of our more careless enquirers, are apt to confound the one with the other. My purpose upon this occasion is,

To distinguish some things, out of our present question, which belong not properly to it, and yet are apt to be confounded with it.

11. To consider the question of law, as bounded by its just and proper

to examine how far the concurrent sense of antiquity was, or was not, maintained.

But I am to distinguish some things out of this question, which belong not to the question, and are to be distinguished from it, such as, &c.

...which is a modern culture, and was not the case where...

of their opinion, as to the nullity of *heretical* baptisms, to have held the validity of baptisms administered by *heretics* within the church. *Tertullian* was

...and they were not only in the same mind as to the former case, and agreed with them in the main pillars of their argument, but that there was but one head one

“church, and one baptizing; and as to tiericks, that they had no fellowing;

The Greek church was burned down when the Black Council in 1722. Was held. See note number

[Tertullian] *quid opinio tua sit, scire nullo modo potest Dominus, cuius, quam ex apostoli literis: quoniam*

cognoscere quod mihi est proprium quibusdam idem dabo. *Deus* & *Christus* & *Sanctus Spiritus*, non enim *Christus*, id est *idem*

Idcirco nec baptizamus nris, quia non idem: *Quia enim rite non habeant, sine dubio non habent.* De Baptismo, cap. 15.

“ with the discipline or regimen of the orthodox, had indeed nothing to do
 “ with them, but were quite without the church, as their being deprived of
 “ communion clearly testified; that therefore christians were not to acknow-
 “ ledge any act of theirs, which was only prescribed by God to christians;
 “ whereas hereticks had not the same God, nor the same Christ with *them*;
 “ and therefore had not the *one* baptism of christians, as being not the *same*
 “ with that of christians; and not having it regular, they had it not at all.”
Thus he. “ Yet he plainly ^c held the *lawfulness* of baptisms administer’d by
 “ laymen in cases of necessity; and even the *duty* then incumbent upon
 “ them to administer it; although in ordinary cases, he thought it justly re-
 “ serv’d to the bishop in the first place, and after him; or in his absence, to
 “ his presbyters and deacons, but all in subordination to the bishop, that his
 “ honour and prerogative might be maintained, and the peace of the church
 “ thereby preserved; which depended very much (in his opinion) upon the
 “ reverence paid to her bishops.” I enter not here into the force of his rea-
 sonings, but am only relating his sentiments, which were not peculiar to him-
 self; since the council of ^d*Eliberis* in about one hundred years after him,
 gave express commission to laymen, in cases of necessity, to baptize. Nor
 doth it hence follow, that laymen were not authorized for this purpose, be-
 fore the commission here was expressly given them; since it might be reason-
 enough for the fathers of the council to declare their sentiments upon this
 occasion, if any doubt had any where arisen concerning it. This (it is true)
 was only a particular council, as *Tertullian* was only a single father: But is
 there any evidence to be set against this on the other side? Doth any father,
 or any council, near the times of this father, or this council, contradict ei-
 ther of them; or so much as glance a reflection at them, for giving such a
 liberty? ^e*Basil* is indeed the first, who hath intimated the least suspicion to
 us, that lay-baptisms, within the church, were at any time held invalid. And
 he lived a great while after *Tertullian*, and wrote many years after this coun-
 cil. But he hath indeed said, “ That *St. Cyprian*, *Firmilian*, &c. did
 “ therefore reject, without distinction, all heretical and schismatical baptisms;
 “ because the rupture of these persons with the church, reduced them to the
 “ condition of mere laymen; and accordingly they directed such to be ad-
 “ mitted into the church by baptism, as if they had received before only
 “ lay-baptism; for tho’ they, who first made the breach, had the Spirit given
 “ them by persons authorized to convey it; yet they lost it, by leaving the
 “ church, and so could not confer it upon others; which made a gap in the
 “ succession, and consequently nulled their acts.” But as this is more than
St. Cyprian appears to have said, or thought; the matter must rest upon the
 single authority of *Basil*; who, after all, was for allowing even *such* baptisms
 as these, by way of dispensation; if the church should judge it expedient.
Augustin’s opinion in this matter is so well known, and we have had, and
 again shall have, such farther business with him, that I forbear at present to
 consult him. *Jerom*, in his dialogue with *Helladius* the *Luciferian*, hath
 plainly enough appealed to the knowledge and practice of the age he wrote in,

^c *Held the lawfulness.*] *Tertullian*’s words are these; *Dandi quidem (viz. Baptismus) habet ius sum- mus sacerdos, qui est episcopus; Dehinc presbyteri et diaconi, non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate, propter ecclesie honorem; quo salvo, salva pax est. Alioquin etiam laicis ius est. Sufficit scilicet in neces- sitatibus ut utaris, sicuti, aut loci, aut temporis, aut persona conditio compellit. Tunc enim constantia suc- currentis excipitur, cum urget circumstantia periclitantis. Quoniam reus erit peccati hominis, si superfederis prestare, quod liberè potuit.* Ibid. cap. 17.

^d *Eliberis.*] In Can. 38. *Peregre navigantes, aut si ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, possit fidelem, (qui la- vacuum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus,) baptizare in necessitate, ita ut si supervixerit ad episcopum eum perducatur, ut per manus impositionem perfici possit.*

^e *Basil.*] *Viz. in Can. 1. Oi di dñstoyvñs laioi yvñpñoi, òti ò βαπτίζον, òτι ò χειροτονῶν λέγει ὁ ἱερεὺς, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἰσχυρὸν χάριν αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν ἐκτετακέντον παραίχον, ὡς αὐτοὶ καταλαμβάνουσι. διὰ δὲ τὰς αἰτίας ταύτας βαπτίζοντες τὴν πρὸς αὐτοῖς κατασκευὴν ἐκχορῶμεν ἐν τῷ οὐκ ὀνόματι, καὶ ἀλλοτρίῳ βαπτίσματι καὶ ὁ κατασκευὴν ἀνακατασκευάζουσι· then it follows, ἰσχυρὸν δὲ ἔστιν ἰδοῦναι, &c.* as cited a little farther.

numbers adhering to them. Thus *Nepotian* got himself ordained by a con-
 vention of bishops; and, as his sect increased and multiplied, it hath been ob-
 served already upon one of the suffrages in this *African* council, that they
 multiplied the number of their bishops, and vied with the orthodox in that,
 as well as other particulars, and forced the orthodox upon settling bishops even
 in some of their larger *villages*, whereas the original establishment of bishops
 was only in *cities*. The great debate between the church and the *Luciferian*
 sect, was, upon the reception given by the church to *Arian* bishops, with-
 out ordaining them; which strongly enough inferred that the church allowed
 the validity of their orders. They both agreed in the validity of *heretical*
 baptisms, when *St. Jerom* wrote his dialogue with *Helladius*; from whence
Jerom argued, that if they allowed the ministration, they ought not to dis-
 tinguish the minister; if they agreed the validity of the baptism, they must not, in
 just reasoning, dispute the authority of the baptizer. For though he agreed,
 that lay-baptism, in cases of necessity, was valid; yet, in ordinary cases, 'tis
 plain he would not have so agreed it. Wherefore he who in ordinary cases was
 allowed to baptize, was either the bishop himself, or a presbyter or deacon
 deputed by him. And hence the *Luciferian* allowance of *Arian* baptisms,
 should have inferred their allowance of *Arian* bishops; because baptism was
 agreed on both sides to be the bishops province, and not to be valid (in ordi-
 nary cases) without the bishops express authority. This must have been the
 foundation of all that reasoning, which so confounded the *Luciferian*, that
 he gave up the cause upon it. They agreed in this, that 'twas, in ordinary
 cases, necessary there should be a priest to make any man a christian; if there-
 fore the christian made so by an heretical priest, was allowed to be a christian
 (i. e. validly baptized) the powers of the person who made him so, ought to
 have been reputed valid, and he should have been acknowledged as a priest,
 or bishop. There was, therefore, no dispute, whether the bishop were not
 in ordinary cases the minister of baptism. *St. Ignatius* had long ago pro-
 nounced, That without the bishop it was not lawful to baptize, nor to cele-
 brate the holy eucharist, nor indeed to do any thing appertaining to the church,
 or to christian worship, i. e. it was not lawful to do it without his authority;
 for without his personal agency, it was often lawful, and commonly practised;
 and what he approved was thought (by the holy martyr) acceptable to God;
 and he gives at the end of that section, a broad intimation, that nothing would
 be either false or valid, which should be done against the bishop's consent and
 liking. So that hereticks themselves had not yet the face to act in things
 pertaining to God, without an episcopal character to shelter and bear them
 out; but as I have said before, they usually trepanned some bishop or other to

One of the suffrages. Viz. No 22. note Macomada.
 That reasoning. As thus. *Arianus baptizans, ipse episcopus est. An Arian baptized, therefore he is*
 a bishop. Now this conclusion would by no means have followed, if any, besides a bishop, or a per-
 son deputed by him, had, in ordinary cases, baptized; or had such baptisms, *ex post facto*, been allow-
 ed at all. For then the *Luciferian* might have replied, 'Not this doth not follow. A lay man may bat-
 tize; and so the validity of his baptism in consequence, as to the validity of his ministerial powers.
Jerom goes on and clinches his argument: *Tu rursus laicum, ex quo non recipis sacerdotem. If you will*
reject the man from being a lay-christian for being so baptized, then, indeed, I will deny the authority of the
proper bishop, who baptized him. But since the validity of the baptism was allowed, this *Jerom* re-
 sponds, *id est, infer the authority of the bishop who baptized him.* Again a little farther: *Proba*
mihi ab Arianis venientem laicum habere baptismum, & tunc ei penitentiam non negabo. Si vero Chris-
tianus non sit, si non habuerit sacerdotem qui eum faceret Christianum, quomodo ipse penitentiam habet,
qui necdum credit? If (saith *Jerom*) you deny the baptism of Arians (which yet the *Luciferians* did not
 deny, only *Jerom* was for fencing against all objections) how is it that you admit them to penance? You
 should first prove to me, that the man who comes over from Arianism, hath the proper baptism, which a
 layman should have; and then, indeed, I may regularly admit him to penance. But if he be no christian,
 if he had no priest or bishop to make him such, how shall he be admitted to the order of penance, who
 is not yet so much as a believer? *Jerom. ibid.*

And again *ibid.* *Si vero Christianus non sit, si non habuerit sacerdotem qui eum faceret Christianum, quomodo ipse penitentiam habet,*
qui necdum credit? *Jerom. ibid.*

ordain

ordain them bishops, that they might procure a reverence for the ministrations which should be performed amongst them; and might not introduce an usage so novel and monstrous, which would be so sure to encounter the prejudice and indignation of the whole christian world, as they would have done, by acting in matters of religion, without some appearance and pretence, at least, of episcopal powers. There was, therefore, no objection made to the baptism of heretics, as if all pretence to the episcopal authority were in their case wanting; since in the days of St. *Cyprian* it was not wholly wanting: The *Novatians* took care to prevent all appearance of any such imputation, by procuring bishops to be ordained amongst them, and by increasing the number of them, beyond all reason or necessity. So that our modern dissenters will hence have little encouragement to depend upon the validity of their several ministrations; tho' it should even be granted to them, that our *African* council was wrong in its sentence upon heretical baptisms. For these *heretical*, were still, we should remember, *episcopal* baptisms. I am not now prejudging the cause of our dissenters baptisms; I would only say here, that, tho' St. *Cyprian's* opinion should be *wrong*, in *rejecting* heretical and schismatical baptisms, which had the *episcopal authority* to vouch for them, it will not therefore follow, that their opinion is *right*, who *allow* such schismatical or heretical baptisms, as are wholly destitute of the *episcopal authority*, and are celebrated even in defiance of it. For these are plainly distinct cases, and the questions concerning them should not therefore be confounded.

These things therefore being thus distinguished out of our present question, as having little to do with it; proceed we,

II. To consider it, as bounded within its just and proper limits. Here a very few lines will suffice, to give the reader a true idea of it. *Novatian* had quarrelled with the church, for receiving those to her communion, who had lapsed in the time of persecution, though she always insisted upon their submission to penance for such their fault. The pretence of greater sanctity was specious and popular, though the motives on his part were base and fordid; for he had been disappointed in his design upon the see of *Rome*, and *Cornelius* had been chosen bishop of it, when he (*Novatian*) would have been so. He had no way therefore of retrieving this miscarriage, but by setting up for himself upon a new foundation, and by charging those, who adhered to *Cornelius*, with defiling the church of Christ, by their communion with such as had deserted her in the day of trial. Upon some he imposed by this cunning and sly suggestion, and so clandestinely procured himself to be ordained a bishop, by some bishops, who happen'd to be at *Rome*, when he was playing his game there. When he had taken this step, his next attempt was to gain over St. *Cyprian* to his interests; but here he failed; and our most vigilant and judicious prelate soon gave warning to the christian world, what the disturber of its peace was doing. And now the rupture was open, and the breach grew daily wider and wider, as *Novatian*, who used all his art and industry in this matter, was enabled to increase the number of his partisans; in which he had so much success, that he procured one *Maximus*, a deputy of his, to be ordained a bishop in *Africa*; as *Felicissimus*, an old enemy of St. *Cyprian's*, procured one *Fortunatus* to be ordained a bishop, in opposition to our holy martyr. Here therefore was an heretical opinion joined with a schismatical practice. The *opinion* was, that the church had no power to remit the scandal given by sins committed after baptism; and the *practice*, which followed it, was, erecting altar against altar, ordaining bishops against bishops; *intruding* bishops, against bishops in *possession*, canonically elected and ordained, and never duly deprived; whereas the church being full, could not regularly receive a second governor, whilst the first continued in the due exercise of his sacerdotal powers. Here were therefore opposite interfering ministrations, baptism against baptism, and sacrifice against sacrifice. Some, it was natural to conceive, would return from their error into

into the bosom of the church, and the question hence could not be avoided, "Whether, upon their return into the church, the baptism, they had received from those hereticks and schismaticks whom they left, should be allowed, or no? Whether it were a perfect nullity, or might be confirmed to them, by their penitential submissions, and by imposition of the bishops hands? If they had received their baptism in the church, before they left it; it was agreed, they did not forfeit it, by going over to heresy and schism; but they were then uncontestably received again with penance and imposition of hands. The only doubt was of such, as had originally their baptism out of the church, whether it should be allowed to them upon their coming into it." We have seen, upon this, the opinion of St. Cyprian and his colleagues in the preceding council; to which I have added all along, by way of annotation upon its several suffrages, the answer which Augustine gave to each of them; and this I did without any design of entering into the debate, whose arguments were weightiest; but only with an hope, that the reader, by observing what topicks the one and the other went upon, might the better be enabled to form a clear notion of church-principles and practices, as they stood in those earlier ages. And with this view before me I proceed to my

The state of the question.

Third and last consideration; under which I shall examine, how far the concurrent sense of antiquity was, or was not, agreed upon this question.

1st. Then it seems to have been agreed on all hands, that no heretical, nor schismatical baptisms, were regular; nor did they confer the Spirit of God, nor the remission of sins. Accordingly they, who went lowest in their relaxations, insisted,

2^{dly}, That all persons so baptized, should be reconciled to the church by penance, and a solemn confirmation from the bishop. Yet,

3^{dly}, The allowance, or disallowance, of such baptisms, seems at last to have been a point of discipline, which the church had power to relax, or to extend, discretionally.

1st. Then it seems to have been agreed on all hands, that no heretical, nor schismatical baptisms, were regular; nor did they confer the Spirit of God, nor the remission of sins.

They, we may be sure, who held with St. Cyprian and his colleagues, did not allow, that either the gifts of the Spirit, or the remission of sins, could be obtained any where, save only in the baptism of the church. There could have been no occasion (as¹ one of them argued) for the return of hereticks to the church, if they had been in a condition of receiving the forgiveness of their sins, whilst they continued out of it. ^m Another we find taking it for granted, that *there was no remission of sins, but in the baptism of the church*; ⁿ a third, arguing from a confessed agreement in this particular; and ^o a fourth, inferring, from the impossibility of hereticks giving the Holy Ghost, (because they had it not,) that they could not therefore give a truly spiritual baptism. All this is so evident, that it needs no comment, nor any farther light. Well! But did not the opponents of St. Cyprian's opinion dispute this point with him? Did they come heartily into the acknowledgment, that hereticks could neither confer the gifts of the Spirit, nor the remission of sins, by any of their ministrations? It is most certain that they were of St. Cyprian's sentiments in this matter; and did not contend with him, for any such power to be allowed to hereticks. Augustine may well be allowed to speak for the rest upon the case before us; since his zeal against the Donatists, who re-baptized all such as communicated with the pretended traditors,

¹ One of them.] Viz. Satius, bishop of Sicilbba, in suffr. No. 39.

^m Another.] Viz. Victor, bishop of Gora, in suffr. No. 46.

ⁿ A third.] Viz. Marcellus, bishop of Zama, in suffr. No. 53.

^o A fourth.] Viz. Successus, bishop of Abbir Germanicana, in suffr. No. 16.

made him the warmest, as he was the most considerable, of our author's opponents. Yet he doth not pretend, that hereticks had any regular powers to administer baptism, or could do it by any rule at that time known or admitted. He states the question between the church and the *Donatists*, by the assertion of these two points, which they denied; viz. ^P that there was true baptism in the church (as it stood then opposed to the *Donatists*) and that there only it could regularly be received. Indeed to the question, of its being not regularly received out of the church; ¹ he answers, that neither could it be regularly retained out of the church; by such, he means, as had received their baptism in the church, and afterwards left it, to follow heresy or schism; from whence he would infer, that it might be received, as well as retained, out of the church, though not regularly, yet validly. Mean while he hath no where intimated the least suggestion, as if hereticks had any power to vest those whom they baptized with the proper privileges of a true baptism. And we need look no farther for his judgment in this matter, than to the answers he hath given to the suffrages quoted in the preceding council; which, without the least hint of any such power allowed to hereticks, hit off the whole argument with a parallel drawn between hereticks and wicked livers: He grants, that neither the one nor the other could receive the remission of their sins, with the sacrament of baptism; but yet insists, that as the one received the remission of sins, and the gifts of the Spirit, upon their return to a right mind, and upon their submission to penitential rigours, without repeating the ordinance of baptism; so the other, upon returning into the bosom of the church, might have the grace of the sacrament then begin to be effectual, without repeating the ordinance; that the ordinance was Christ's, by whomsoever administered; and when the parties to whom it had been administered irregularly, and hitherto without effect, came in, and qualified themselves for the benefits of it; then, and then only, he supposed them capable of reaping those benefits. He expressly and clearly agrees with the ¹ bishop of *Misgirpa*, that what is done out of the church, hath no efficacy towards procuring salvation: But then he distinguishes and says, 'Tis one thing to affirm, that the sacrament cannot be had out of the church; and another thing to affirm, that it hath no efficacy (to persons continuing out of the church) in procuring salvation. To the latter he subscribes very heartily, but the former he denies: For he thought the validity of the sacrament, a point very different from the benefits of the sacrament. The former he believed might be, where the latter were wanting; as in the case of those who renounced this wicked world (which was the common form) at their baptism, not in deed, but in word only. These had the sacrament, but not the graces of it; to which they were, however, entitled, without repeating the sacrament, upon their true repentance; and so, he thought, might hereticks be, upon their reconciliation with the church: All this while he agreed entirely (we see) with St. *Cyprian*, that the sacrament (whether valid or not) was, however, ineffectual to those

^P That there was, &c.] Duo sunt qua disputamus; & esse in Ecclesia baptismum; & illis tantum recte accipi. August. in lib. 1. de Baptismo, contr. Donatist.

¹ He answers.] Quod si haberi foris potest; etiam dari cur non potest? Si dicitur, non recte foris datur, respondemus; sicut non recte foris habetur, & tamen habetur; sic non recte foris datur, sed tamen datur. Ibid.

¹ Bishop of Misgirpa.] In suffrage No 2. these are Augustin's words; Quod autem ais; Nam quæ foris exercentur, nullum habent salutis effectum; consensio, & omnino verum esse credo. Aliud est enim non ibi esse, aliud, nullum habere salutis effectum. Venientibus enim ad catholicam pacem prodesse incipimus quæ foris inveniunt, sed foris non procedunt. August. in lib. 3. de baptismo, contr. Donatist.

[Ineffectual.] Even upon the question, whether, the baptism of those is to be held as valid, who have received it, from such as had it not, themselves; though he proceeded so far, as, in his private opinion, to allow the validity of such a baptism (but he would not determine the case for others, except some general council should give judgment in it) yet, he agreed, it would not be effectual to any saving purpose, whilst they continued destitute of that charity, which should join them to the catholic church. Nequaquam dubitarem habere eos baptismum, qui ab eis; & a quibusvis; illud verbi evangelicis consecratum, sine sua simulatione, & cum aliquo fide acceptissimum; quanquam eis ad salutem spiritalem non prodesset, si charitate caruissent, quæ catholica inferretur Ecclesia. Ibid. in lib. 7.

who received it, till it was confirmed to them by the authority of the church, and of their proper bishop, upon their return into her bosom. So that tho' it should be acknowledged, that heretical, and schismatical, baptisms are valid, and need not, therefore, be repeated, upon the reconciliation of the persons (so baptized) with the church; yet, upon the foot of those principles, which universally obtained in the four first centuries, such persons can reap no benefit, no advantage, no spiritual privilege, till they come into the unity of the Spirit, and repair those bonds of peace which they have broken. They therefore who go out of the world, with the sin of heresy, or of schism, uncanceled, have no baptism which will be of any use to them, as giving them any title to the promises of the gospel. What mercy God will extend to the ignorant and deluded, is none of our question; nor is it in any manner here intended to limit or restrain it, or to prejudice the case of those who are its objects. My wishes and prayers, I am sure, are for them, that they may find the very largest measure of it: But it would be prevaricating with truth, if, whilst I am representing the sense of the church in her earlier ages, I should conceal the sentiments of her venerable fathers, out of any false tenderness to modern cases: I should ill follow the advice and the pattern given to the ministers of the gospel, by our holy martyr, in his excellent treatise of the 'unity of the church, *should I offer to impose upon any of my brethren, by specious and false pretences; or corrupt the purity of our most holy faith by departing from a just defence of it.* In cases of extreme danger, or ill consequence, charity and moderation are best, I think, expressed, by warning men of it, and not by telling them that all is well; and they are very safe. The church of Christ, 'tis evident, was unanimous in her sentiments of those who received their baptism in heresy or schism; that they received it to no purpose, unless they returned into her bosom: The dispute was, whether it should even *then* be allowed to them without repeating it; and in this, we shall see, there was some diversity of opinion. But *all* were agreed, that whilst the persons, who received such baptism, *continued* out of the church, it was of no use nor service to them; conferred *at the time* no spiritual privilege, and contributed nothing to their salvation: They must return into the church, to give it a proper efficacy; Whilst they stood out, it was judged as unavailable to the remission of their sins, as a baptism would be, which should be administered, to an hypocritical, impenitent receiver. This was the sense of those who spoke and thought most favourably of heretical or schismatical baptisms. A return into the church was held essential, to the efficacy of all such baptisms. But neither was this return a thing of slight consideration, or of easy practice. For

2. The persons, so baptized, and so returning, were reconciled to the church, by penance, and a solemn confirmation from the bishop.

'Tis here apparent, from the acts of 'this very council, that even they who were permitted by it to return into the church which they had forsaken, without repeating their baptism (because before they left the church they had received their baptism *in it*) were re-admitted by penance and imposition of hands. Even they, who went to the lowest terms with hereticks, and relaxed to them the necessity of being renewed by baptism, had no notion of receiving them, because they were pleased to be in an humour for returning into the church; but insisted upon their submission to the penitential discipline; and then, they had, in course, the imposition of the bishop's hands, which I have shewn elsewhere, to be a constant attendant upon the forementioned disci-

* Unity of the church. See note, * on §. 4. of that tract.

* This very council.] Viz. in *Isidr.* No 8. where all hereticks and schismaticks are directed to be baptized; such only excepted, as were baptized originally in the catholic church; and these, on their return, were ordered to receive imposition of hands in order to their penance, and so to be reconciled to the church in the common course of the penitential discipline. And to this there was no where any objection.

* Elsewhere.] Viz. in *penitential discipline*, ch. 2. p. 1. § 3.

The highest privilege, which was then pretended to, was of having
 the church doors open to them, upon such submissions. They never pleaded
 for, nor expected, a reception into it, without giving all possible testimonies
 of the sense they had of their error, and of their desire to re-unite with the
 church, and to bind themselves to her, in the closest bonds of peace and com-
 munion. There was therefore a solemn reconciliation of those to the church,
 who had been in a state of enmity with her; which, where it was not made
 by baptism, was, at least, done by imposition of the bishop's hands. And
 this, besides its being a ceremony always attending the penitential discipline,
 was judged moreover necessary to confer the gifts of the Spirit, and the re-
 mission of sins. This (we have seen) was all along the argument, whereupon
 the determinations of our council were very much founded; that the Holy
 Ghost could not be conferred, that sins could not be forgiven, out of the
 church. This the fathers of it thought an invincible proof, that the baptism
 of hereticks was good for nothing; and this was a point on all hands granted.
 Augustine was the most of any concerned to dispute it, if it had not been an
 undeniable maxim: But he chose rather to distinguish upon the case, than to
 set at nought such a general and current persuasion; and therefore his solu-
 tion was, that there might be *valid* baptism, where the gifts of the Spirit
 were not at the time conferred, and no remission of sins was granted; that
 the effects of such a baptism did then begin to operate, and to be available,
 when the receiver of it qualified himself for the privileges appendant to it, by
 returning into the bosom of the church: Accordingly the grant of these pri-
 vileges was reserved for the hands of the bishop, which alone were supposed
 capable of conferring them; as he alone was indeed the regular administrator
 of baptism. Wherefore the council of *Arles*, which censured the abettors
 of our present synod, as following a peculiar custom, did yet direct, "That
 such, as should return from heresy, should have the usual *baptismal inter-*
rogatories put to them, and then have hands laid on them, that they
 might receive the Holy Ghost." And the second general council, held
 at *Constantinople*, appointed all such hereticks, as were not to be re-
 ceived by baptism into the church, to be received, however, with the
 ceremonies then customary in *confirmation*, after having solemnly re-
 nounced all heresy, and engaged, expressly, not to disturb the peace
 of the church by any future innovations. They were to be anointed
 with the holy chrism, in token of their receiving, by that rite, the gifts of
 the Holy Ghost. Here therefore it may, with great truth and justice, be
 observed, what little advantage would accrue to any of our modern hereticks,
 or schismatics, by allowing to them, what some amongst us contend for
 so warmly on their behalf. Be it true, that their baptism needs not to be re-
 peated upon their coming into the church; yet, upon these ancient, undispu-
 ted principles of the catholic church, it is likewise true, that whilst they
 continue out of it, such baptism is utterly useless to them; confers upon them
 no privilege, entitles them not to the remission of sins, nor to the gifts of
 the Holy Ghost. These they are yet to seek for; and it doth not appear
 from the sense of antiquity, that there was any other way of finding, or se-
 curing them, but by a return to the unity and communion of the church.

[Highest privilege.] See *suffr.* No. 5. where they are censured as making too favourable a construction
 for themselves, who fancied, that they might receive the Spirit by imposition of hands only. Even these
 men, tis evident, had no opinion, that the Spirit could be received without it, tho' they hoped they
 might receive the Spirit with it.

[Holy Ghost could not be conferred.] See *suffr.* No. 50, 52, 64, 81.

[Council of Arles.] In Can. 8. *Arles*, ubi dicitur, *ut baptizati, placuit, ut si ad
 ecclesiam aliquis de heresi revertatur, interrogetur, et si perdidit, cum in pace, et filio, et
 Spiritu Sancto, et baptizatus, et non est in pace, et filio, et Spiritu Sancto, non accipiat Spiritum Sanctum. Quid si inter-
 rogatus, non respondet, tunc deinde interrogetur, et si respondet, tunc deinde interrogetur, et si respondet, tunc deinde interrogetur.*
 [To be avoided.] See the canon quoted, and the words of it translated in note upon the next para-
 graph. [Second general council.] See *suffr.* No. 10.

Mean while the sin they had been guilty of in departing from her, or in holding out against her, was considered as an offence of the deepest and blackest dye; worse, as some thought, than that of direct^b heathenism. But tho' we should grant, that these censures might be somewhat too severe, and might overstrain their point; yet the apostle, we are pretty sure, knew how to weigh it in an exact balance; and^c he ranged it (we may remember) amongst the worst of sins; such as were^d never pardoned in the ancient church, without solemn penance. It must indeed have been esteemed very gross and grievous, when it was so universally agreed to separate between the ordinances of Christ, and the privileges appendant to them. Whosoever therefore is engaged in the guilt of it, should be exhorted, with all compassion and zeal, to think of his danger; and not, as the way is, to imagine the church of Christ obliged to him, whensoever, or howsoever, he shall be pleased to return to her. He should not suffer the shame, which might attend even a publick reconciliation to discourage his return, were that discipline extended to its utmost rigours. Mean while it will perhaps deserve the consideration of those, who are entrusted with the care and regimen of Christ's flock; whether the too great easiness and indulgence, which have been used in receiving such as come over to it, may not have contributed to their indifference, whether they come, or no. If they, who are already in it, seem not to value their privilege, nor to lay any stress upon it; it may be naturally thought, by those who are out of it, that there is no great matter thereupon depending. Whilst they, who should most insist upon the importance of church-communion, are negligent in pressing it; others, who have not thought of it, will be equally negligent in complying with it. The notion seems indeed quite lost or forgotten; and we are become by degrees so tender to our brethren, that rather than we will ruffle them with disagreeable *truths*, we suffer them to imbibe the most destructive *errors*. But we have at last no reason to believe, that any modern advocates for moderation, have at heart more charity, than the primitive apostolical worthies of our holy religion. Now these (we find) never thought it their duty to soften the sin of schism, nor to relax the terms whereupon the return of such persons to the communion of the church was suspended. The bishop would not then receive them at any, or at all, adventures, but they were to go thro' the common forms; and were judged unfit for so great a privilege, if they refused their submission to them. They, who well know that these principles are too strongly founded to be easily overturned, or denied with safety, have ever and anon suggested, that the times and seasons are improper for insisting on them. But I humbly conceive, that we must now, or never, insist upon them; since all appearances forbode to us, that if they are not now recovered and retrieved to us, all remembrance of them soon will vanish; and he, who in a few years hence shall be so adventurous, as to publish them, will be called (as the good apostle was) *a setter forth of strange gods*. Yet,

Acts 17. 18.

3^{ly}, The allowance or disallowance of these irregular baptisms, seems at last to have been considered, by both the contending parties, as a point of discipline, which the church had power to relax, or to extend discretionally.

If St. Cyprian had not judg'd it so, he would scarce have opened his council, with telling the fathers of it, that the question before them was not of such a nature, as that communion should be broken for it on one side, or on the

^b *Heathenism*.] See suffr. No. 37.

^c *He ranged it*.] See suffr. No. 5. and Galat. 5. 19, 20, 21. cited in it.

^d *Never pardoned in the ancient church*.] This point is distinctly handled, in ch. 1. p. 1. §. 1. of the penitential Discipline; where the crimes are enumerated for which that discipline was inflicted.

^e *As that communion should be broken*.] *Superior. et de hac ipsa re singuli quid sentiantur proferamus; nominem judicantes, aut a jure communionis aliquem, si diversum senserit, abstinemus; In prologo sancti Cypriani. And again; Quando habent omnes episcopi pro licentia libertatem et potestatem suam arbitrium proprium; Ibid.* The effect of this must needs have been, that if any person had come accidentally

the other; and that every bishop was master of his own conduct. Had the persons, I say, who received heretical baptisms, been esteemed, as incapable of becoming christians by imposition of hands, as *Jews* and heathens were, (who, it is certain, could not be admitted into the church, but by baptism only,) *St. Cyprian* would never have thought so mildly of those who so received them, or permitted his people to join in communion with them. This would have indeed profaned the great eucharistical sacrifice, if mere heathens had been allowed to partake of it. *St. Cyprian* might think his own opinion, with the practice of his latest predecessors, and both confirmed by synods, preferable to the contrary; he might hold it more expedient, more for the edification of the church committed to him, that her discipline in this point should be straitned, than relaxed. But as we shall see in the conclusion, that different churches had different usages, upon the case before us; we might hence alone be enabled to form a very probable conjecture, that this was no doctrinal question; which yet it must have been, if the church had no power to determine it, as occasions should require. For, as *Tertullian* well observed; *So long as the rule of faith* (the matters of doctrine) *remained entire without innovation; other points of discipline and daily usage, might well admit of variety and change.* Accordingly, in the very first suffrage of our present synod, *Cecilius of Bith* makes his complaint of the iniquity of the times, which even compelled the church to admit the persons, thus irregularly baptized, to her communion; a strong intimation, surely, that the church had it in her power so to do, though he (*Cecilius*) was against her using it so indulgently, and thought such use of it highly inconvenient! Yet we may certainly hence infer, that he did not think the church communicated with mere heathens, when she communicated with persons thus baptized: Had he, or any of the rest, entertained such a scandalous and gross conceit of her; we may easily collect from the principles and practices of that age, that they would have held no communion with her: None of them would have spoken so softly, as we find *St. Cyprian* speaking in the introduction; or, as we afterwards read *Sedatus of Tuburbo* giving his judgment; "That, as far as they could proceed in this matter, without breach of peace; he was for insisting, that they who received their baptism in heresy, should receive it in the church upon their coming over to it." This was, none of it, I observe, the language of men, who took the question before them to be a point of doctrine, whereupon the very essence and being of the church were in a great degree depending. *Augustin*, in his answers to these several suffrages, makes great advantage of these concessions; and retorts upon the *Donatists* the moderation of *St. Cyprian* and his colleagues, whom they professed to follow, and who did not yet, as the *Donatists* did, proceed to a rupture with such as differed from them upon this question. In after times there was a great variety used in the administration of this discipline: They who received their baptism in a state of heresy and schism, were universally rejected, and their baptism was held a perfect nullity,

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hereticks have to them, as upon the power of the church to dispense, for the sake of peace, with irregular ministrations, which was the proper meaning of *Basil's oikonomia*. Upon these principles, therefore, the church is supposed to be intrusted with discretionary powers, in the case of baptism; and she may confirm *ex post facto* an irregular ministration of it. Without her allowance it will never indeed avail for the remission of sins; but when any come to her, desiring such allowance, she may dispense with the repetition of it, tho' they did not receive it originally from her hands. Whether she should, or should not, dispense with it, seems to have been judged a prudential point, which we find to have been variously determined, according to the different occasions and conjunctures of place and season. *Augustine* indeed was entirely against the repetition of it in his private judgment; but yet hath declared, that he would submit his opinion to the judgment of the church, whenever she should declare it in a general or provincial council; and that it would not be safe for any man to be very peremptory, till such a declaration. So that he seems to have looked upon the case, as then not thoroughly decided, at least, not in all the branches, which might fairly arise out of this grand question. It is evident, however, that he would not, in this case, have departed from any usage, which should have had the approbation of the church, even tho' it should have thwarted his own particular persuasion. It may become us, I should humbly think, to follow his example, and to submit this dispute to the judgment of authority, and to the received practice of the church. If any should doubt, what this judgment or practice is, and, in the present desuetude of synodical determinations, should not be able to obtain any certainty in it; the judgment of his own bishop should, I conceive, determine him: ^p He being the person originally entrusted with the power of dispensing this ordinance; and what he should approve in this, or any other administration, having been anciently esteemed ^q most acceptable in the sight of God. Mean while in a state of such uncertainty, and till this affair can receive a judicial sentence; may I not have leave to propound, with the greatest deference and submission to higher powers, the ^r hypothetical form of baptism? Which, in all cases of doubt, as to matter of *fact*, whether the child (or person) *hath been baptized, or no*; is our undisputed rule of proceeding: Why then, may it not be so, where the matter of *right* is doubted, till the doubt at least be removed by a synodical sentence? This I only propound, with all the tenderness, which becomes the proposal of a person in no authority; to which I shall only add my truest wishes, that all were alike disposed to submit their private sentiments, to the regards of unity, peace, and order.

And now having distinguished out of this question some things which belong not to it; having stated its just limits; and examined how far the concurrent sense of antiquity was agreed upon diverse particulars relating to it; we have nothing farther to consider, than only the disagreement of opinion, and diversity of practice, which obtained in different churches concerning the *validity* of these *irregular baptisms*.

What the sense of *St. Cyprian* and his colleagues was upon this question, hath already appeared at best advantage in their own words. *Tertullian*

^p *Augustine.* Sed nobis tutum est in ea non progredi, aliqua temeritate sententia, qua nullo in catholico regionali concilio capta, nullo plenario concilio terminata sunt: id autem sit cura secunda: necis afferimus, quod in gubernatione Domini Dei nostri ex Salvatore Jesu Christo, universalis ecclesia consensum rubricatum est. In lib. 7. de Baptismo. cont. Donatist. c. 93.

^q He being the person. *Tertullian* hath been cited already in this dissertation to prove him so. De Baptismo. c. 17. Dandi quidem (viz. Baptismum) jam habet summus sacerdos: qui est episcopus, &c. & c. ^r Most acceptable. *St. Augustine* Douceur, &c. Ep. 23. ad Cyprian. in Ignat. epist. ad Smyrnes. 8. cited also in this dissertation.

^s Hypothetical form. See the opinion of our right reverend editor upon this, in note (f) they could be ready to conclude §. 13. ep. 73. in a case, where the question turned entirely upon matter of right, and not of fact.

^t *Tertullian.* De Baptismo. p. 15. cited at the beginning of this dissertation. Quam (viz. Baptismum) cum rite non habeant, (heretici) sine dubio non habent.

ing all baptisms which were administered out of the church. He doth, nor say, that they made a *new* determination; but rather, that they *confirmed* an *old* one. The doubt which arose upon the validity of the *Montanist* baptisms, seems to have been founded on a supposal, that the *Montanists* differed not from the orthodox in any point of faith; and so their separation from the church was *schismatical*, but not *heretical*; at least it seems not to have been *clearly known*, to have been at most but *suspected* only, that they held any doctrinal error. In the articles of the Father and Son, they were certainly orthodox; and it did not then generally, nor fully appear, what their sentiments were concerning the Holy Ghost. Had it been known, that they baptized into any other Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, than what the church acknowledged; their baptisms would have been nulled without all peradventure. But as the case was only *schismatical*, there arose some doubt upon it, which was soon determined, and the prevailing usage of disallowing such baptisms, after mature deliberation, was solemnly there *confirmed*.

What we find to our present purpose, in the apostolick canons, will next deserve our notice; that which is the 46th in number of them, directs the bishop, or presbyter, to be deposed, who should allow the baptism, or sacrifice (the holy eucharist) administered by an heretick; as the 47th doth the same concerning that bishop or presbyter, who should reject a true baptism, or not baptize a person who had been polluted with heretical baptism (so *Balsamon* and *Zonaras* interpret the words) as mocking the death and passion of Christ; and not discerning the legitimate from the counterfeit priesthood. The reason why it was held equally criminal to disallow, and to admit a *false* baptism, was that universally received notion of there being *but one baptism*; which made the fathers of our *African* synod very careful to avoid the imputation of re-baptizing, or of asserting more baptisms than *one*. These canons, perhaps, might be unknown to *Steven*, bishop of *Rome*; as being collections chiefly from synods held in *Asia*, and in the *Great* church; otherwise (rash and cholerick as he was) he would scarce have born so hard upon a practice, which had such good supports, and such early precedents. If we go lower, we shall find, that divers fathers adhered to the opinion thus founded, even after the *Nicene* council. The great bishop *Basil* hath been already cited, and we have seen that his sentiments were entirely with our present synod; though with the modesty of our saint and martyr, he was, indeed, for obtruding upon none, but was for leaving each country to its own customary usage; only he lays somewhat more stress upon baptizing the *Eunuchites*, &c. and is very loth to receive them, except some great inconveniences should follow the rejecting them; because they acknowledged not the same God (the Father) with the orthodox. But he declares his own opinion plainly, and expressly in his very first canon.

Legitimate. This referred not to the business of sacerdotal powers, nor to the commission whereby these powers were conferred; but hereticks evermore took care to stand clear of all objection in that point; but the *legitimate* priesthood was that which was exercised *within* the church; as the counterfeit was that *without* it. Even a baptism *legitimate* with respect to sacerdotal powers, was nulled by *Firmitian*, and the bishops who concurred with him. To which purpose the reader may observe what he (*Firmitian*) saith in his letter to our author No. 75. §. 14. But the canon, here cited, referred, in all likelihood, to the *Montanists* or *Cataphrygians*, who disallowed the baptisms of the church.

Rebaptizing. See this especially fenced against in *Justin* No. 35. §. 8. and in our *vision* No. 1. §. 5. and 6. and 7. and 8. and 9. and 10. and 11. and 12. and 13. and 14. and 15. and 16. and 17. and 18. and 19. and 20. and 21. and 22. and 23. and 24. and 25. and 26. and 27. and 28. and 29. and 30. and 31. and 32. and 33. and 34. and 35. and 36. and 37. and 38. and 39. and 40. and 41. and 42. and 43. and 44. and 45. and 46. and 47. and 48. and 49. and 50. and 51. and 52. and 53. and 54. and 55. and 56. and 57. and 58. and 59. and 60. and 61. and 62. and 63. and 64. and 65. and 66. and 67. and 68. and 69. and 70. and 71. and 72. and 73. and 74. and 75. and 76. and 77. and 78. and 79. and 80. and 81. and 82. and 83. and 84. and 85. and 86. and 87. and 88. and 89. and 90. and 91. and 92. and 93. and 94. and 95. and 96. and 97. and 98. and 99. and 100. and 101. and 102. and 103. and 104. and 105. and 106. and 107. and 108. and 109. and 110. and 111. and 112. and 113. and 114. and 115. and 116. and 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tant upon the case, is *Firmilian's* account of the synod at *Iconium*, already cited, which ranges them both in the same class; and, moreover, insists upon a preceding custom in favour of its sentence. The plea of custom (we must however acknowledge) was resorted to by those who contended for the *validity*, as well as by those who asserted the *nullity* of heretical and schismatical baptisms. And *Steven*, bishop of *Rome*, insisted with great warmth against the determination of our *African* synods, that custom was on his side. But then he had no such vouchers as *St. Cyprian* and his colleagues had. For tho' there are diverse testimonies (which have here been cited) expressly declaring the *nullity* of such baptisms; I cannot find one, before the time of pope *Steven*, asserting their *validity*. However, from *his* time downwards, the *Roman* church maintained his assertion, and received the persons so baptized with imposition of hands, without insisting on the repetition of their baptism. And the weight of her example drew in (we may be sure) very many to follow it; so that, by the time when the council of *Arles* was convened, the usage of *Africa*, which stuck a great while to *St. Cyprian's* practice, was almost singular, as the 8th canon (already cited) takes notice. There was no comparison between the personal merits of *St. Cyprian* and pope *Steven*; and no bishop was accountable to another for what he did in his own diocese, otherwise than in the way of a brotherly correspondence; so that their authority was perfectly equal. And therefore *Steven* was much in the wrong to carry matters to the height he did. But when personal merits were thrown out of the question, and *St. Cyprian* and *Steven* both were dead; it was no wonder that the usage of the *Roman* church, should find more adherents than the practice of the *Carthaginians*. Upon broaching the schism of *Donatus*, which proved coincident with the *Arian* heresy, there seems to have been some change of the topics, which had been usually, till then, resorted to in the management of this controversy; and, as anciently the debate run much upon the *competency*, or *incompetency* of the baptizer's power, as he was within or without the church; so from this period downwards, it turned most upon the words of the institution, the more or less punctual observance of the *form*, and the distinct invocation of each person in the blessed Trinity. By this rule, we find, that the nullity or validity of baptisms was henceforwards judged of, and the powers of the administrator entered very little into the account. The reader may be pleased to cast his eye back upon what hath been cited from *Athanasius*, *Basil*, the first and second general councils; which will enough convince him, that the *form* of baptism was then the great article of enquiry in this question; and as *that* was more or less punctual in acknowledging each person of the blessed Trinity; the baptisms so administer'd, were either confirmed or repeated. When once it was found necessary or expedient to relax the *baptismal discipline*; reasons and hypotheses were easily found to justify it; and nothing thenceforwards, was so much looked to, as a particular and express recognition of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, in the administration of this ordinance. That canon of the council of *Arles* hath been already cited, which "directs the common interrogatories to be put to such as should come over to the church from heresy; and then, if it were found, that they had been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; hands were to be laid upon them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; but if it should appear upon enquiry, that there had been any error with regard to the blessed Trinity, they were to be admitted into the church by baptism." And upon this principle all the distinctions seem to have been founded, which were henceforwards made between the baptism of one sort of hereticks and another. We have a great deal in *Optatus*, bishop of *Milevi* (who lived and wrote in the same century which the council of *Arles* was held in, clearly shewing us, that this was the great point (then) insisted on in this famous question. Comparing

John 13. 10.

ring baptism with circumcision he saith, *That the baptism of christians, which is administer'd in the name of the blessed Trinity, conferreth grace; but if it be repeated, 'tis fatal, as death; that, that is the true baptismal water, which, without any regard to the circumstances of place, or person, is consecrated in the name of the blessed Trinity; that, where the truth is not, there the baptismal water is false and counterfeit; that the advantages of baptism do not depend upon the person of the administrator; but that the believer's own faith, and the blessed Trinity together, do procure them; that, his (Opratus's) declared opinion had ever been, that it was not man, but the blessed Trinity only, which derived, upon each believer, the heavenly gift; that the state of the question between the Donatists and the orthodox was, whether, after any person had been baptized into the blessed Trinity, it were lawful to baptize him again into the same; the affirmative of which was held by the Donatists, and the negative by the orthodox; accordingly, that the church received such Donatists as came over to her, with all imaginable simplicity; (i. e. did not put them to the difficulty of re-baptization;) and that her practice herein had some countenance from her great Master's example; who told St. Peter, that he, who once was washed, needed not, save to wash his feet, &c. That, in the sacrament of baptism there were three particulars to be considered, all, of great and confessed, tho' not all of equal moment. The first was the blessed Trinity; the second, the faith of the believer; the third, the person of the administrator; that, it was absolutely necessary for baptism to be attended with two of these; but that the third was not of like account; (i. e. it was indeed necessary there should be an administrator; but who that administrator should be, was not so material, as the faith of the believer was; or as the names were, into which he was baptized;) that, the particular, of greatest importance, was the blessed Trinity, which was essential to the business; the second, the believer's faith; next, and last of all, was the person of the administrator, which was not of like moment with the two preceding articles; and the reason given for it was, that the person of the administrator was flux and alterable; but the blessed Trinity was unchangeable; as indeed were the sacraments themselves. Wherefore (as he proceeds to argue with his adversaries) since they, who are employed in this office of baptizing, are instruments in it, and not lords; ministers, and not masters; and since the sacraments of Christ have an inherent holiness cleaving inseparably to them, and utterly independent on any human agent; how is it that ye are so pre-*

That, &c.] In lib. 5. contr. Parmenian. Sic & baptisma christianorum trinitate confectum confert gratiam; si repetatur facit vitia iacturam.---Aqua igitur sola & vera illa est, qua non de loco, non de persona, sed de trinitate condita est.

Ubi veritas non est, ibi est aqua mendax. Ibid.

Has res (viz. the advantages of baptism severally there recounted) unicuique, non ejusdem rei operarii, sed, credentis fides & Trinitas confert. Ibid.

Et nos docuimus celeste munus unicuique credenti à Trinitate conferri, non ab homine. Ibid.

Cujus (viz. Baptismi) de sacramento non leve certamen innatum est, & dubitatur, an post Trinitatem in eadem Trinitate hoc iterum liceat facere. Vos dicitis licet; nos dicimus non licet. Ibid.

Quoties à vobis baptizatus aliquis ad nos transitum voluerit facere, venientem, hoc magistri exemplo, (viz. John 13. 10.) tota simplicitate suscipimus. Ibid.

In hoc sacramento baptismatis celebrando tres esse species constat, quas & vos nec augere, nec minuire, nec prætermittere potestis. Prima species est in Trinitate, secunda in credente, tertia in operante. Sed non pari libramine ponderanda sunt singula. Duas enim video esse necessarias, & unam quasi necessariam: Principalem locum Trinitas possidet, sine qua res ipsa non potest geri; hanc sequitur fides credentis: Jam persona operantis vicina est, qua simili autoritate esse non potest. Ibid.

Reason given.] Cum persona operantis mutari possit. Ibid. And again; Operarii mutari possunt, sacramenta mutari non possunt. Ibid.

Cum ergo videatis omnes qui baptizant operarios esse, non Dominos, & sacramenta per se esse sancta, non per homines; quid est quod vobis tantum vindicatis? Ibid.

Quam diu dicitis, qui non habet quod det, quomodo dat? Videte Deum esse datorem; videte Deum unumquemque mundare. Ibid.

Nemo sanctus fuerat in Trinitate. Ibid.

Nomen est quod baptizat, non opus.

sumptuous?

sumptuous? &c. How long and often will ye repeat to us your old objection; whence should he give, who hath nothing to give? When God is here the giver, and cleanseth every man, who is sanctified by his baptism? Afterwards, speaking of the insufficiency of John's baptism, he gives this account of it; that no one was baptized by him into the Trinity: And again he saith; that it is not merely the action of baptism which compleats the sacrament; but the name which is invoked in it. By this time therefore (*viz.* about the year 370) the notion seems to have been pretty clear, and pretty well established, even in Africa, (where St. Cyprian's memory, we may be sure, had as much veneration paid to it, as any where else,) that a baptism, celebrated in the name of the blessed Trinity, was valid, whosoever were the administrator; the church, at least, was willing in those times to confirm, and receive it as such, whatsoever irregularity might, in other respects, attend it. The promiscuous re-baptizations, used amongst the *Donatists*, had so turned the dispositions of all the orthodox against such a presumptuous practice, that the church was thenceforwards willing to allow of any baptisms, which acknowledged the blessed Trinity in the form of their administration. At the same time also the growing error of *Arius* might be a reason for her receding from too strict a regimen with regard to hereticks. *Augustine* likewise, soon after this time fell into the cause with the whole weight of his reasoning, authority, and learning, and gave such a blow to the more strict and ancient discipline, that it hath never since recovered its former vigour. As he was a zealous enemy to the *Donatists*, he pursued them warmly, and beat them out of all their holds. He even carried his point so far, as, in his own opinion, to allow the most irregular baptism, tho' he was not for determining this point peremptorily, till a council should settle it. But he saith, "That if he were member of such a council, and had there the same sentiments which he had at the time of his writing upon this subject, and were not overborn by superior reasons; he should be for admitting any baptism, which was celebrated in due form, according to the words of the institution." And even upon a ludicrous baptism, celebrated where there was no society of believers, he was not for pronouncing harshly, but was rather for waiting a divine revelation, than censuring it, absolutely as null and void." We have seen, however, that he thought there was no saving baptism out of the church; that it was useless to the receivers, without that charity which should reconcile them to the church; tho' he believed penance and imposition of hands to be fitter methods of reconciling such persons, than the repetition of their baptisms was; since he could not utterly disallow the sacraments of God, tho' administer'd in a state of schism. The length however of his allowances shews us clearly, that the schism of the *Donatists*, and their practice of re-baptizing, had carried the orthodox a great way off from their former principles; and, I presume, we may alledge, without breach of charity, (since it was only an effect of human frailty,) that opposition had a little sharpened their spirits, and set them at the wider distance from each other.

And here, I think, we may put a stop to our farther enquiries, and need not be solicitous to examine what was the practice of later centuries. *Augustine* was so very active in this controversy, and had so much to say in it; that he had many followers, and his opinion met with a pretty general concurrence. Yet even he, (I observe,) who went lowest in his concessions towards irregular baptisms, agreed them to be of no service, till they were perfected by the return of the persons so baptized, to the unity and commu-

* *Augustine.* De Baptismo, lib. 7. cap. 53.

x Not utterly disallow. Quibus rebus ostenditur, & ipsos impii facere, qui rebaptizare conantur orbis unitatem; & nos recte facere, qui Dei sacramenta improbare, nec in ipso schismate audemus. *Augustin.* de Baptismo. lib. 1. cap. 1.

nion of the catholick church, and receiving *there* a confirmation. And the nearer approaches we make to those elder and better times, wherein the church of Christ had the least of alloy, or of human mixtures; the more evidence we find of her insisting on her discipline, and of her exacting a submission to it, from all who should stand entitled to her privileges. And tho' in worse, and later ages, she was forced to make abatements, and to recede from her ancient rigours; and therefore to *dispense* with diverse things, which she before *adhered* to with great strictness and severity; yet, even in her largest indulgences, she never proceeded to our modern tenderness, of receiving hereticks or schismatics into her bosom, without the most solemn renunciations made on *their* part of their former errors; and, on *her own* part, the most authentick professions, that she held whatever had been done for them in a state of heresy or schism to be utterly irregular, and indeed of no use nor advantage to them, till it were perfected and compleated by her authority. She exerted her charity, in warning the *disorderly* of their sin and danger; in holding off from them, till they were wrought up to a due sense of their condition; and apprized of the privileges they had forfeited by their departure from her. A promiscuous admission of all, without insisting upon any terms with them, it was easily foreseen, would deprectiate the value and importance of her communion; and that none would set a price upon what might be had for any thing, or for nothing. How far the utter neglect of discipline in these latter ages, may have contributed to that loose latitudinarian spirit which prevails amongst us; must be left with those to consider who have power to set us right. Morality is now the *common cry*; and it would be happy for us, were it equally the *common practice*: But it hath never yet been found, that *morality* could support it self without an *instituted religion*; and, where there hath been no such thing, as an *instituted religion*, there hath always; however, been some *pretence* to it: Which shews us the general persuasion of mankind, that somewhat of that sort was necessary. In other cases it is thought a very imprudent, or else a very treacherous part, to demolish our works, or to break down fences and enclosures. Let a man tell me, never so demurely, that he means honestly and kindly to me; I should never, for my part, trust him, if I saw him picking my lock, in order to save my treasure. Morality ('tis confessed) is this treasure, the jewel of greatest price, in all religious appointments; but religious appointments have, nevertheless, a subordinate and proper value, and *that* derived from their subserviency, to secure and strengthen the interests of moral virtue; *these* are never safe, without somewhat of rite and ceremony to protect and fence them. In that revelation which we have of God's will amongst us, we find him, accordingly, much and often insisting upon a punctual adherence to his *positive* ordinances; and tho', at the time of our Saviour's appearance, the *Jews* were got into an extreme of *excess*, as having smarted so much for their former *neglects*; yet our Saviour himself was pleased, we may observe, even in his purer and more spiritual way of worship, to institute two *solemn rites*, which he consigned over in trust to the stewards of his Mysteries, as *keys* wherewith to shut or open the doors of his church. We have seen how strict they were in the use of them for diverse ages; how much stricter in the *earlier*, than in the *later* centuries; and how loose we are in our present regimen; how much looser, if possible, we are daily growing; and what little probability there is of a return to any exercise of discipline, or any sense of its importance; private men, may see, lament and complain; but *they cannot, they ought not, to prescribe the remedy.*



mon of the catholic church, and receiving from a congregation. And the
 nearer approaches we make to those elder and better times, wherein the



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Genuine WORKS

OF
ST CYPRIAN,

ARCHBISHOP of **CARTHAGE,**

AND

Primate of all **AFRICA.**

PART the SECOND.

Containing His

EPISTLES.



And now that we have seen how much we have lost in the time of a
 the discipline of the church. So we can see how much we have lost in the
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THE

Genuine Works

OF

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THE
Genuine WORKS
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St. CYPRIAN.

PART the Second.

Containing his EPISTLES.

EPISTLE I.

A. D. 249.
Epistle I.

Was written upon occasion of Geminus Faustinus being appointed executor to the will of Geminus Victor, and entangling himself thereby in an office foreign to his proper employment, as a presbyter of the church. St. CYPRIAN had not been long in his bishoprick, when this case happened; and at a meeting among some of his fellow bishops, with his presbyters assisting in it, this affair was considered; and our author, in the name of all the rest, returned the following answer to the church at Furnis, in the year 249.

^a Had not been long in his bishoprick.] In all likelihood this period must have been in those times of a long and continued peace, which preceded the Decian persecution, and had indeed relaxed very much the discipline of the church. So we read our author complaining in the case of the lapsed, §. 4. See note [long continuance of peace] where the bishops are reprehended as neglecting their high trust, and entering upon the management of secular affairs, &c. The four following epistles, all of them, favour of such a relaxation in discipline, as naturally follows a long course of prosperity and quiet; and therefore are all with great probability referred to the year 249.

PART II.

A

CYPRIAN

CYPRIAN to the presbyters and deacons, and to the lay-brethren of the church at Furnis, ^b who stand fast in their holy profession, sendeth greeting.

IT was a great concern to me and to my colleagues, who happened to be here with me, as well as to our ^d brethren-presbyters, who were assisting to us, with their advice and council; when we received the news, that our brother *Geminus Victor* at his death had appointed *Geminus Faustinus* (a ^f presbyter of the church) executor to his will. Since it hath been long ago determined ^e in a synod of bishops, that no one should nominate in his will, a clergyman, or a minister of God, to be an executor or a guardian; because no person who is honoured with a portion of the priesthood, and settled in the ministry of his church should be called off from his service at the altar, nor be interrupted in his oblation of ^b sacrifices there; but should always be at liberty to attend his proper business of *making prayers and intercessions* to God continually. For thus we find it written; *No man who is listed in the service of God as his soldier, entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen and approved him.* Now since this is said of christians at large and in general; how much more will it hold as to clergymen in particular! Who are indeed more strongly obliged than others, not to engage themselves in the entanglements of secular business; because they have a business of another nature to employ them, a business of a spiritual and heavenly kind; and therefore ought not to forsake the care of their churches, and cannot, consistently with it, find time and leisure for foreign occupations.

1 Tim. 2. 1.

1 Tim. 2. 1.

2 Tim. 2. 4.

2 Tim. 2. 4.

§. 2.
That the Levites being employed in a ministry about holy things, sets forth to us the fitness of christian priests being exempt from secular engagements.
Num. 18. 20.

2. This was the method and regiment established for the *Levites* under the law of *Moses*; who, when the eleven tribes divided the land, and parted amongst themselves the several portions of it, received no determinate parcel out of that division; as being appointed to the service of the temple and the

^b *Who stand fast.*] *Consistentibus*. Here I follow Bp. Fell in my interpretation of the word *consistentibus*, as signifying somewhat more emphatical than mere local residence, habitation, or presence; and as distinguishing therefore with a mark of honour, and brotherly correspondence; those who stood fast in their profession, from hereticks, schismatics, or other apostates; although 'tis certain the word is used sometimes to signify mere local residence. See ep. 30.

^c *My colleagues.*] These were always bishops in our author's style and language; distinct, as here be-
most plainly makes them, from his presbyters.

d Brethren-presbyters.] *Compresbyteri*, as here he calls them; they were presbyters, so indeed were bishops, and in that regard were brethren; as *lay-men* were christians, and so were bishops and presbyters; and in that respect they all were brethren, as usually indeed *St. Cyprian* styled the laity. But then Bishops were still in respect of order and power, superior to both of them; and they are manifestly here distinguished from the *compresbyteri*, who only assisted, but did not judge.

^e Geminus Victor.] He might probably enough be a bishop, notwithstanding that he is not here called *colleague*, but a *brother*; for this latter is an appellation often given by our author to those of his own order; and though it did not carry so much distinction with it, as the *former* title, yet we are to consider, that our author at this time reformed his practice, and was passing a censure upon his memory, and so might chuse not to give him his highest character of honour.

made it penal to refuse when offered; so that the person in such case accepting it was not to be censured, but rather the person who laid him under that obligation. Wherefore the bishops of the christian church forbid any person who was a christian, to appoint a clergyman executor or guardian. This appointment of the ecclesiastical power had very early confirmations from the civil authority, when the Emperors became christian. Bn. Zell.

§ in a synod.] What this synod specially was is not come to our notice; but as it is said to have been lately held, it might probably be the ordinary synod of the preceding Easter; however, the 6th of the apostolique canons (which was a collection of canons made in diverse synodical assemblies of the earliest ages) hath especially provided, that no clergyman, whether bishop, priest, or deacon, should engage himself in secular business, under pain of being deposed. *Ἐκτοστὸν δὲ περὶ κληρικῶν ὁ ἀποστόλος κελεύει*

^b *Sacrificers.*) Observe how the word *altar* and *sacrifice* are used, to signify both the most solemn place and act of christian worship.

¹ 2 Tim. 2. 4.] See this cited and noted in §. 11. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

relaxation in discipline, as naturally follows a long course of propriety and quiet; and there-

4

Part II. A. CYPRUS

11

altar, and employed in the several ministrations thereunto belonging; and so whilst the rest were engaged in cultivating the ground, they only cultivated the worship of God; and accordingly received from the other eleven tribes ^k the tenth of their increase from the fruits of the earth; which proportion was allotted to them for their support and maintenance. Now this whole establishment was settled by the express appointment and authority of God; that they who were especially devoted to the offices of religion, might have no avocations from them, nor be obliged to mix with secular cares or employments. The reason of all which, as well as the method it proceeds in, holds at this time with regard to the ^l clergy of the christian church; that they who are ordained to that service, and promoted to the honour of that office, should not be distracted from their holy ministrations; nor tied down to the drudgery of secular engagements; but that by the liberal ^m contributions of the lay-brethren, they should receive an honourable support (answerable to that of a tenth under the *Jewish* oeconomy) and thence be enabled to attend *their* altar and *their* sacrifices without interruption, and to fix all their attendance upon religious offices. These things were maturely considered by our religious predecessors; who, therefore, have made a wise and wholesome provision in the case before us, that no retainer to the christian community should leave a clergyman a guardian or executor; and if any should presume to do so, there should be ⁿ no remembrance of him at the holy eucharist, nor any oblation after his death be made for him. And indeed the censure is very just upon those, who would call off *from* the altar its priests and ministers, that the priest should not mention the names of such *at* the altar. Wherefore since *Victor*, against the express letter of the canon, lately made upon this occasion in an assembly of bishops, hath presumed to appoint *Geminus Faustinus*, a presbyter of the church, his executor; you have, we think, no reason to make any oblation for him; nor to offer up, on his behalf, the customary prayers of the church: By which means we shall both secure a reverence for this synodical decree, and establish an useful precedent; which, it is hoped, may prevent any person from calling down to a lower employment the priests and ministers of God, whose whole time and care should be devoted to his altar.

A. D. 249.
Epistle I.

^k *The tenth.*] For the universal practice of assigning this proportion towards the maintenance of divine worship; See note [*tythes of our possessions*] in §. 20. unity of the church.

^l *Clergy.*] As to the distinction of these from the laity, no man, who hath heard any thing of the usages of the christian church, from her very infancy to these times, can be ignorant of this distinction; and almost every epistle of our author, shews it to have been the practice of his age. See, however, note [*clergy*] on the title of the 8th epistle.

^m *Contributions of the lay-brethren.*] *In honore sportulantium fratrum*, i. e. the honor *sportulantium fratrum*, the liberal or (honourable) contributions of the lay-brethren, were to answer the design and measure of tythes, in an handson support of their clergy. How the revenue hence arising was disposed of, see note [*poor of the church*] on §. 4. of the case of the lapsed.

ⁿ *No remembrance of him at the holy eucharist.*] In the beginnings of christianity there was an honourable mention made in the most solemn offices, and an express recital of the names of such (under each parochial, or diocesan district) who had departed this life in the faith and fear of God, and in communion with his church; and as converts multiplied, and grew too numerous to admit in general of such a practice, it was restrained in after-times, to persons of more eminent sanctity, bishops, &c. whose names were recited at the altar in the *diptychs* of the church. When any crime was committed by the person, at or before his death, for which, had he lived, he would have fallen under any degree of ecclesiastical censure; his name was struck out of this list, by which (as the epistle here goes on) there was an example given to the living, and a sanction to the publick discipline, as in the case before us. These names were recited with a prayer and an oblation made for them; as *Tertullian* also hath attested in his book *de Coron. Milis*. cap. 3. *Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis annuâ die facimus*. This was therefore done yearly on the day of their death; but all this, I say, was for the sake of the living, as a testimony of their faith, and hope, and charity; and to keep up a sense of a future state, rather than with any prospect of lessening the pains of the departed, or of praying them out of any purgatory state. For they who *most* wanted the benefit of such prayers as these, were struck out of the privilege; and they who had *least* need of them, they, of whose condition *most* hope was entertained, had the most unquestioned title to them, as well as the largest share of them. See more of this in §. 14. of the case of the lapsed, note [*whilst yet in the land of the living*] and note on §. 2. of the plague, [*lest so go to Christ*] as also note on §. 10. *Ibid.* [*place of refreshment*]. N. B. Our observation of saints days is easily hence deducible, and may hence derive a clear vindication. See note [*observe the days*] in §. 2. ep. 12.

There

A. D. 249.
Epistle I.

There is, however, great likelihood, that clergymen will, for the future, be excused from such avocations, if a due resentment be shewed upon the present occasion. And thus, my dear brethren, I bid you heartily farewell.



EPISTLE II.

A. D. 249.
Epistle II.
Written before
his retire-
ment.

Was written to one Euchratius, a brother, (but whether bishop, presbyter, or laick, doth not certainly appear) upon occasion of a player converted to the christian religion, and leaving off the stage; but yet continuing to train up others for it, and to instruct them in that naughty practice. The question hence arising was, whether such a person was to be continued in the communion of the church, who exercised a calling attended at that time with very untoward circumstances. Hence it should seem that Euchratius was in some degree of the clergy; such a question coming more properly from one in that order, than from another person.

CYPRIAN to his brother Euchratius sendeth greeting.



YOU have been pleased, my dear brother, agreeably to that mutual affection and regard which we bear each other, to consult me upon the case of a certain player, who is settled amongst you, and still perseveres in his scandalous profession, of ruining rather than instructing youths, and of communicating to others that pernicious skill, which he hath, himself, unhappily acquired; and you have asked my opinion, whether such a person should be admitted to the communion of the church? My answer is, that I conceive it dishonourable to the majesty of God, and a reflection upon the discipline of his holy religion, that the sanctity of his church should be profaned, and her character blemished, by suffering the infection of so foul a guilt to come near her. For since we find men forbidden in the *Mosaick law* to *put on a woman's garment*, and whoever doth so is pronounced an *abomination unto the Lord his God*; how much greater, in all reason, must the crime of those be judged, who not only *put on womens garments*; but whose business moreover it is, to teach the imitation of all their effeminate gestures, and finical airs and motions?

Dent. 22. 5.

[*Mutual affection.*] This looks as if Euchratius were a bishop, our author thus addressing him in terms of equality; and such an one there was of Threnea, a city of Numidia Byzacena, in the council of Carthage, suffrage 29. See the last note on this epistle, [*dear son.*]

[*Scandalous profession.*] So Tertullian in lib. de Spectaculis, c. 22. hath emphatically called it, and told us moreover under what disadvantages and incapacities the Roman law had laid it: And the infinite lewdnesses and debaucheries of the profession are assigned as the reasons of the disgrace which it lay under: *Ipsi auctores & administratores spectaculorum, Quadrigarios, Scenicos, Xysticos, Harenarios, illos amantissimas quibus viles animas feminae, aut illi etiam corpora sua subserunt, propter quos in ea committunt, quae reprehendunt, ex eadem parte quam magnificiunt, deponunt & deminunt, imo manifeste damnant ignominia & capitis minutione, arcentes curia, rostris, senatu, equite, caeterisque honoribus omnibus simul ac ornamentis.* In which words he refers, in all likelihood, to that praetorial edict, (now the Praetor was here the Administrator spectaculorum,) which we have extant in lib. 3. digest. tit. 2. De his qui notantur infamia, Julianus lib. 1. ad edictum. Among whom is reckoned, *Qui artis ludicra promouendi causa in scenam prodierit.* Upon which Ulpian in lib. 6. ad edictum, saith, *Eos enim qui quastus causa in certamina descendunt, & omnes propter praeium in scenam prodentes famulos esse, Pegasus & Nerua filius responderunt.*

[*Put on womens garments.*] Tertullian hath drawn the same conclusion from that of Dent. 22. in the forementioned book, §. 23. *Ceterum cum in lege praescribit, maledictum esse qui muliebris vestietur, quid de Pantomimo, iudicabit, qui etiam muliebris curatur?*

2. It is a very trifling excuse which is made in this case, to say, that truly the party *himself* hath left off acting, when yet he teaches *others* that pernicious art. For indeed he can, in no reasonable account, be said to have left off, who acts by *others* under him, and who, instead of performing in his own single person, breeds up a number to carry on the same trade after him; instructing people, how to break in upon the appointments of God, by melting down a man into a woman, and by an unnatural change of sexes, making court to the devil, who delights in marring the workmanship of heaven, and in enervating the strength of it, by practices too lewd to be decently mentioned. If a man will here pretend, that necessity and want drive him to this resort; he may enter himself upon the list of those, who are maintained by the ^d treasury of the church, and thence may find a proper relief; I mean, if he will bring himself to be content with a more *spare*, tho' an *wholsom*, diet; and not expect to be bought off from sin, by a ^e large pension, when it is *his own*, and not *our* interest, which is thereby consulted. But if his desires cannot be satisfied without being answered in their highest demands, he must look out for *such* an answer to them, amongst the pernicious gains of those, who steal men away from the banquet of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, in the kingdom of heaven, and *so* fatten them *here*, as to leave them *hereafter* in a perpetual state of *leanness* and destitution. Wherefore your business will be, to use your utmost endeavours in reclaiming this man from his scandalous trade and practice; in gaining him over to a more innocent way of living, by a prospect of supplying his necessities; and in persuading him to be content with the allowance of the church; which, if it be less plentiful, is, however, more for his advantage. But if the stock of your church be low, and cannot afford him maintenance; you may easily send him hither, and here he may be accommodated with food and raiment; where instead of teaching others the practices which will prove destructive, he may learn for himself, what will be conducive to his own salvation. And thus, my ^f dear son, I take my leave, and bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 249.
Epistle II.
§. 2.

An answer to the trifling excuse of this player, that he had left off the practice of the stage, whilst he instructed others in it.

Matt. 8. 11.

^d Treasury of the church.] See note [poor of the church] in §. 4. of the case of the lapsed; and on §. 2. epist. 1. note [contributions of the lay-brethren.]

^e Large pension.] Salaris; viz. Such as was given out of the publick revenue, to officers of the first rank, in military matters. Bishop Fell.

^f Dear son.] This appellation shews us, that if *Euchratius* were a bishop, he must have been a very young one, and of a fee, which owed much deference to that of *Carthage*. Yet the main tenour of the epistle, shews him to have been such, as having the direction of that whole affair, which gave occasion to it. Might not *sili* be the transcriber's mistake for *frater*? I dare not determine any thing in a case of this nature; where there are no MSS. to support my conjecture.



A. D. 249.
Epistle III.

EPISTLE III.

Written before his retirement.

Was also written in the times of peace, whilst discipline was a good deal relaxed; in answer to a certain bishop (Rogatianus) whose see is not certainly known, but, who had complained to our author of the ill usage he had received from one of his own deacons, desiring St. Cyprian's advice how he should proceed with him.

CYPRIAN to his brother Rogatianus, sendeth greeting.

§. I.

MY self and my colleagues, dear brother, who were present with me at the reading your letter, were very much concerned to find from it, that you had so just a cause of complaint against your deacon, for the contempt he had poured upon your episcopal character; forgetting the duties of his station, and the rank he held under you, and incensing you by various injuries and provocations. You have herein proceeded with your usual modesty, by paying such a deference to our sentiments, as to lodge your complaint with us; when you might, if you had been pleased, have used your own authority, and immediately exerted against him the full strength and vigour of your episcopal jurisdiction. You might have assured your self, that, whatever you should have done in this affair, by virtue of your sacerdotal power, against your presumptuous deacon, would have received our approbation; since, as to cases and persons so circumstantiated, you have a rule appointed by God himself in the book of *Deuteronomy*, saying; *And the man who will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge, who shall be in those days, even that man shall die: And all the people shall hear and fear, and shall do no more wickedly.* And as a proof, that God hath not only threatened, but hath put his threats in execution after a very terrible manner, to vindicate the honour of his priesthood, we may observe, that when *Corah, Dathan and Abiram*, three of *Aaron's* subordinate officers, presumed to set up against him, to raise their crests, and to vye with him for rank and station, who was appointed their superior governour; *the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and justly punished their sacrilegious presumption: Nor only so; but the two*

Deut. 17. 12, 13.

Numb. 16. 1. and 32.

^a Rogatianus.] *Pamelius* hath conjectured, that this *Rogatianus*, was the same whom we found in the council of *Carthage*, giving his suffrage as bishop of *Nova*. (No 60.) But because we find St. Cyprian mentioning the old age of our present *Rogatianus* in the close of his epistle, therefore Bp. *Fell* thinks he could not be the same with him of *Nova* in the council of *Carthage*; his suffrage (of *Nova*) standing so late as the 60th in number; which, according to the custom of the *African* church, spoke him to have been one of the junior bishops. But with great submission to the truly venerable name of our right reverend editor, might he not have been an *elderly man* (which is all we can gather from St. Cyprian's words in the close of his epistle, where he runs a parallel between the youth of *Timothy*, and the more advanced years of our *Rogatianus*) and yet he might not also have been a *young bishop*? If these two things are consistent, (which they certainly are) then may the conjecture of *Pamelius* stand good, and *Rogatianus* in the council, might be the same with *Rogatianus* in this epistle. And indeed his application to St. Cyprian, for advice what to do in a case of such an ordinary and common nature, speaks him to have been *young* in his office, whatsoever his age might be. See suffr. council of *Carth.* No 71 and 78.

^b Own authority.] Observe here the bishop's sole power in censures, when he had a mind to exert it.

^c Subordinate officers.] *Tres de ministris*, are our author's words; which fairly hint to us the character of a deacon, who was indeed a *minister*, such as the *Levites* under the law were to the high-priest. To one of whom (*viz.* *Corah*) *Moses* in *N.* 10. of the chapter quoted, saith; *He (viz. God) hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi, with thee; and seek ye the priesthood also?*

hundred and fifty men, who had joined themselves to their company, had a fire sent out upon them from the Lord, which utterly consumed them. Thus he, who instituted the priesthood, avenged the outrage which had been offered to it. In like manner, when the Jews began to despise the government of the prophet Samuel for his old age (which is pretty near your case) the Lord in great displeasure pronounced against them; *They have not despised thee, but they have despised me:* and as a punishment of such their sin, he raised them up a King, Saul by name, to vex them with various injuries, and to oppress and crush a stiff-necked presumptuous people, with all sorts of rigorous and insulting treatment. And thus was the haughty insolence of that people, towards a priest of God, chastised by the divine justice. Solomon hath also taught us by the direction of the Holy Ghost, the great dignity and authority of the priesthood, saying; *Fear the Lord with all thy soul, and reverence his priests.* And again; *Honour God with all thy soul, and honour his priests* likewise. Of these several precepts we may well suppose the apostle St. Paul to have been mindful, when, as we read in the acts of the apostles, it was said to him; *Dost thou thus insult and revile God's High-priest:* And he answered and said; *I wist not, brethren, that he was the High-priest: For it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.* Even our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was, himself, our King, our Judge and God, yet continued till the day of his sufferings, paying all due observance to the High-priests, and to the other chiefs of them; although it was notorious, that they had lost all fear of God, and refused to acknowledge the mission of his Son. Thus when he had cleansed the leper, he said to him, *Go thy way, shew thy self to the priest, and offer the (appointed) gift.* With a sample of that humility which he recommended to his followers; he vouchsafed to honour the holy character of a priest, in one, whom otherwise he knew to be a profane and sacrilegious person. Thus likewise, when in the midst of his cruel passion, he received a blow, with the following sarcasm; *Answerest thou the High-priest so?* He replied, we find, with no reflection upon the person of the High-priest, but singly with the view of maintaining his own innocence; *If I have spoken evil you might upbraid me with it; but if well, why smitest thou me?* All which instances of meekness and patience were by him exhibited, that he might set us an example of the same virtues. For I think the inference is fair and strong; that if he behaved himself with so much respect and deference, even to false and pretended priests; regular and true ones, are entitled to a much higher degree of honour, and observance from us.

^d Government of the prophets.] Our author, when he mentions Samuel, calls him *sacerdos*, i. e. he governed the Jews as God's immediate deputy, and being a prophet of God's own choosing, the title of *sacerdos* belonged to him very properly, though he was not of Aaron's line; but was extraordinarily commissioned to offer sacrifice, and to govern that people. See 1 Sam. 13. from v. 8. to 14. He was therefore to them instead of King and priest too, according to what Virgil hath said of Anius;

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum, Phœbique sacerdos. Æneid. lib. 3. v. 80.

^e As a punishment of their sin.] To this the prophet Hosea (13. 11.) seems to design some allusion, where he saith; *I gave thee a King in mine anger,* &c. Bp. Fell.

^f By the direction of the Holy Ghost.] Solomon in *Spiritu Sancto constitutus, docet,* &c. This is not the first example we have met with of our author's ascribing this, with some other books, now held as apocryphal, to some degree of inspiration. See note on §. 4. of alms and good works, [by the testimonies of truth is self] with other passages and notes which are there referred to.

^g With all thy soul.] This seems to have been an addition of our author's, as quoting, perhaps, only by memory; or inserting those words again which he had just before cited from v. 29.

^h Insult and revile.] So our author reads it. *Sic insilis in sacerdotem Dei maledicendo.*

ⁱ Character of a priest.] He distinguished therefore between the person and the office; between the holiness of the one, and the blemishes of the other.

^k You might upbraid me.] *Exprobra de malo,* are our author's words. *Maculæque et vitia,* to which our translation literally answers, are the words of the original; from whence Bp. Fell conjectures, that the word intended by our author, was *exprobra*, i. e. prove, or make out fully, the charge of evil, which you alledge against me. The sense is, both ways, much the same, and so it will not be needful to add upon it any farther criticism.

A. D. 249.
Epistle lll.

S. 12. 1001
Bishops suc-
cessors to the
apostles.

Mark 3. 14.

S. 12. 1001

S. 12. 1001

That the rise
of heresy and
schism is ow-
ing to a con-
tempt of the
episcopal pow-
er.

John 14. 27.

1 Tim. 4. 12.

S. 12. 1001

2. Now deacons should remember, that our Lord himself chose his¹ apostles, i. e. indeed the bishops and governors of his church; whereas the apostles only, after the ascension of Christ, appointed deacons to serve as ministers of the church, in subordination to their own episcopal authority. Wherefore if any man can judge it fit or lawful for us bishops to do any thing against the authority of God, which made us bishops; then, and not otherwise, may our deacons plead their privilege to act in contradiction to our authority, which made them deacons. Upon the whole then; the deacon, concerning whose case you have written hither, ought most solemnly to repent of his presumption; to acknowledge the superiority of his bishop; and by the lowest submissions, to make him the best amends he can, for his former pride and insolence.

3. This indeed is the most usual rise of heresy; and hence doth schism derive its original and main support; that men please themselves in such attempts; and treat their bishop with contempt and scorn. By these means they are led into a separation from the church; erect a profane altar out of it; divide from the unity which God hath appointed; and rebelliously break that peace, which Christ hath so solemnly commanded to be kept inviolate. If therefore the deacon you complain of shall persevere in his outrages and affronts, you will make a very proper use of your episcopal authority, either by^m deposing or excommunicating him, as you shall find most expedient: For if the apostle St. Paul, writing to Timothy, had reason thus to caution him; *Let no man despise thy youth*; with how much more propriety and reason may your colleagues say to you; *Let no man despise yourⁿ age*? And since you have farther signified to us, that another person hath taken part

¹ Apostles, i. e. indeed bishops, &c.] That bishops were ever understood to be successors of the apostles in the standing and ordinary parts of their office, is apparent to all who know any thing of antiquity, and are not resolved to judge of it by modern notions. So St. Clemens Romanus in his first undoubted epistle to the Corinthians hath told us, (S. 44.) *That our apostles* (speaking of them as his own contemporaries) *knew by our Lord Jesus Christ, that in after-times there would arise contentions in the church upon account of its episcopacy and government; and therefore upon a perfect foresight of what was to happen, they appointed the persons above referred to, and gave a rule for all future successions; that so when themselves should depart this life, their ministry might be conveyed, and handed down to other persons of approved sufficiency, for that important service.* And St. Ignatius, in his epistle to the church of Smyrna, (S. 8.) hath run the point a little higher, and exhorted them all, to follow their bishop, even as Jesus Christ followed his Father; and his council of presbyters, as the apostles themselves; and to honour the deacons, as an institution of God's. Here we may observe the three orders all distinctly mentioned. And Irenaeus hath born his express testimony to the regular succession of bishops, from the age of the apostles down to his own. We can reckon (saith he) a catalogue of bishops, ordained by the apostles in our (several) churches, and deduce the line of them down to our own times, (book 3. ch. 3. against heresies.) Tertullian soon after spoke the same language, and declared expressly, That in the churches founded by St. John, the bishops thereof might be traced up to the times of that apostle, and so would finally terminate in him, as their first ordainer. And the rest of the churches (he observes moreover) were all entitled to the honour of apostolick founders, (in book 4. ch. 5. against Marcion.) He had before (viz. in his book of prescriptions against hereticks, ch. 32.) challenged hereticks to produce the original of their several churches; and to derive the catalogue of their bishops in a proper order of succession, from the age of the apostles down to their own; so as to fix their first bishop, upon the appointment either of an apostle himself, or of some apostolical person, who continued in fellowship and communion with the apostles. This, with him, and with the rest of those truly primitive fathers, who have here been cited, was the test and characteristick of a true church. Origen hath likewise told us, That the bishops of his time understood that particular branch of the apostolick power, which consisted in binding and loosing, to belong as properly to themselves, as it did to St. Peter, to whom it was originally granted; and they exercised it accordingly as he did; tract. 1. in Matthæum. Our author here and elsewhere repeats this point, and frequently insists on it: In epist. 45. we shall find him mentioning, the unity delivered down originally from Christ, and thence, thro' his apostles, to us his successors. In epist. 66. observing, that what Christ said to his apostles, (Luke 10. 10.) he spake to all bishops, who should come after the apostles in a successive ordination. In epist. 69. censuring such as no true pastors, who pretended to act without a legitimate succession: And finally, in epist. 75. we may read Firmilian interpreting the power given to the apostles, (John 20. 22.) as extending to all the churches founded by them, or by their order; and to the bishops who succeeded them, by a (regular) vicarious ordination. Thus we have this matter (of bishops being proper successors to the apostles) deduced to us from the original of the christian church, down to our author's times: And I hope and pray, that this point may be seriously and impartially considered, by those who are most concerned in it.

^m Deposing or excommunicating.] The former sentence would have reduced him to the condition of a mere lay-man; and the latter would have gone yet farther, and deprived him even of lay-communion.

ⁿ Your age.] *Senectutem tuam.* See note above on the superscription of this epistle [Rogatianus.]

WOL. 2

with this insolent deacon, and joined with him in his presumptuous and haughty treatment of you; him, and all such as, with him, shall attempt any thing against the authority of God's priesthood, you may either restrain by private admonition, or, if that will not do, by publick censure. Only in all such cases, it is evermore our advice and practice, to labour in the first place the bringing offenders to a sense of their crime, to persuade them, that they would make satisfaction for it, and suffer us to pursue the measures we are most inclined to. For we would always overcome the injuries and affronts which any man shall offer us, by clemency and forbearance, rather than animadvert upon them with our episcopal power. And now, my dear brother, I have nothing farther, but to bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 249.
Epistle III.

Matt. 18. 15,
16, 17.



EPISTLE IV.

A. D. 249.
Epistle IV.

Is most justly reducible to the same year with the three preceding ones; if an apparent relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline, were a proper reason for reducing those three, to that long interval of peace and prosperity, which attended the church, before the Decian persecution interrupted it. For indeed discipline must have been relaxed to a very notable degree, when women (who passed too under the character of more reserve and modesty than others, even virgins, reputed and professed) were suffered to sleep in the same bed with men. This was the case, and scandal, which our author wrote the following epistle to remove and to redress. And a very proper employment it was for our African bishop to be concerned in, whilst the times allowed him to be active in his charge; which opportunity (as he tells Cornelius in his epistle N^o. 59.) he endeavoured to make the best of, for the restoration of a languishing enfeebled discipline.

Written before his retirement.

Cyprian, Cæcilius, Victor, Sedatus, Tertullus; together with the presbyters, who were present with them, to their brother Pomponius send greeting.



WE have received and perused, dear brother, the letter you sent us, by our brother Paconius; wherein you desire our answer, and with it, our opinion of those virgins, who, after the professions made by them of their design to continue so, and of inviolably

§. 1.

^a Long interval of peace.] Viz. 38 years, from the reign of Severus to that of Decius. See note [long continuance of peace] in §. 4. of the case of the lapsed.

^b Tells Cornelius.] Viz. where our author saith of himself, *In quiete serviens disciplina.*

^c Cæcilius.] These who joined with Cyprian in this letter were, all of them, bishops; and we have three of their names in the council of Carthage, in suffrage 1, 18, and 40. When any of the African bishops were occasionally at Carthage, St. Cyprian always took their advice, in any business concerning his province, which, we may observe, extended far and near beyond his diocesis; whether it were originally in the way of honorary deference paid by bishops of less sees, to the metropolis of their civil government; or whether there were thence any claim of right, any established subordination of the one to the other; it is in fact most certain, that the bishops of those greater sees had immemorial usage, for consultations with, and applications to, them from the several churches within their province, upon all extraordinary emergencies.

^d With the presbyters who were present.] Note the presence of presbyters in all synodical assemblies, and in all occasional meetings of the bishops, for ecclesiastical business; tho' they had no decisive vote, yet they were assessors with their bishops, and were consulted with, as our judges (e. g.) may be in our house of lords; tho' they have no vote there.

^e Sent us by our brother Paconius.] Bishops always corresponded with their brethren, by clergymen; who represented them; and transacted their several negotiations.

^f Virgins.] How particularly they entered into the care of the church; and how far the professions here alluded to, were binding to them; see in notes [virgins] and [devoted themselves] in §. 3. of the habit of virgins.

A. D. 249.
Epistle IV.

adhering to a life of continence, have been afterwards discovered lying in the same bed with men. One of these men, you tell us, is ^s a deacon, and likewise that the virgins, who own the fact of lying in the same bed with men, do yet insist upon their innocence, and affirm that their chastity remains untouched. Now since you have thought fit to consult with us upon this unhappy business; we give you to understand, that we flinch not from the rules which have been handed down to us from the very beginnings of the gospel, and from the apostles themselves, or apostolical persons; and therefore we are for consulting the interests of our christian brethren, by a firm and steady adherence to all fit methods of wholsom discipline; remembring what our Lord hath spoken, saying; *I will give you pastors according to mine heart, who shall feed you^h with discipline*; with what is elsewhere written; *Whoso despiseth discipline is miserable*: As likewise what the Holy Ghost hath dictated for our instruction in the book of *psalms*; *Preserve discipline lest the Lord be angry, and so ye perish from the right way, when his wrath on the sudden shall be kindled against you*. Wherefore, dear brother, there is nothing of more or greater moment to the true interests, both of the clergy themselves, and of the people committed to their care, than that those amongst us who truly fear God, should keep close to the rules of his holy discipline; accordingly we should not suffer our brethren to be guilty of any misbehaviour, nor to live at large and at discretion, after a vile and profligate manner; but should consult with all fidelity and care the spiritual advantages of each. ^k Virgins should not be permitted to co-habit with the other sex, should be so far from sleeping in the same bed, that they should not live in the same house together; inasmuch as the infirmity of the weaker sex, and the inconstancy naturally cleaving to their greener age, should, upon all occasions, be under our government and direction; for fear of an opportunity being hence given to the tempter, who is always upon the watch for it, of surprizing them to their great detriment; the apostle likewise having specially warned us, *not to give place to the devil*. The ship which once is got among the rocks, will need a good deal of skill and management to bring her off with safety, and to prevent her being dashed to pieces against them. When once an house hath taken fire, the goods must be got out of it with all possible expedition; or else the flames will soon reach, and devour them. A man in the midst of danger, will not long continue so, without a great increase of it: Nor will a servant of God be long able to escape the machinations of the devil, who hath suffered himself to be entangled in his wiles and snares. The present case will therefore require our speediest interposals, that these people may be separated from each other, before their innocence hath quite forsaken them; since it will be afterwards too late to do it, and, perhaps, in vain to attempt it. How fatal and ruinous hath this proved to many! I observe it with grief of heart, that these unlawful and dangerous cohabitations have corrupted the purity of numbers among

Ephes. 4. 27.

^s A deacon.] And therefore the scandal was the fouler, for the sanctity of the order he belonged to. A fact like this happening afterwards in the church of Constantinople, proved almost fatal to the discipline of the Eastern churches. Bp. Fell. The unlearned reader may see an account of this latter case translated from b. 5. chap. 19. of Socrates the ecclesiastical historian, in the appendix to penitential discipline. No 2.

^h With discipline.] With knowledge, say we and the LXX, and the vulgar Latin. See this passage cited and noted in §. 1. of the habit of virgins.

ⁱ Psal. 2. 12.] See this cited and noted in §. 66. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

^k Virgins should not be permitted to co-habit with the other sex.] The learned Mr. Dodwell hath observed upon this, in the 3^d of his Cyprianic dissertations, that this custom might probably be derived from the usage of the most noted among the Greek philosophers, who had ladies of the first quality resorting to, and abiding in their houses, upon the score of learning; (such was Cicero's Cornelia) yet he thinks the custom not much older than our author's time; from the apologies of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras and Theophilus Antiochenus; who, when they were purging the christians of the crimes objected to them, never take any notice of this. Paul of Samosata is conjectured by him to have been the author of this usage, which the council of Antioch condemned in him, but yet did not finally extinguish the custom; since

among our virgins. Let those of them who are sincere in their¹ professions A. D. 249. of dedicating themselves to the service of Christ, abide by those professions with modesty and sobriety, without giving any occasion of ill reports, or suspicious concerning them; and upon their constant and steady perseverance, they may, with all safety, depend upon receiving their recompence: But if they will not, or cannot continue in their purpose, it were better, and more advisable for them, *to marry than to burn*, or otherwise to fall into such a dangerous snare for want of it. They should be sure (however) to give no scandal to their brothers or sisters, of the same holy community with themselves, as remembering that it is written; *If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh, whilst the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.* 1 Cor. 7. 9. 1 Cor. 8. 13.

2. Nor let any one expect or hope to be excused by offering to stand a search; since this is a course which is liable to great uncertainties: For though she should be acquitted upon such a scrutiny; yet she should consider, that there are several ways wherein she may be corrupted, and yet no inspection nor search will make the least discovery. If there were really nothing more in it, than what is visible to all the world; yet their lying together in such an undecent manner, with those foul and ugly circumstances, which must needs attend it, would unavoidably carry great scandal with it. Should an husband catch his wife in bed with another man, would it not raise his passions to their utmost height? Would there not be danger of his jealousy provoking him to some desperate expression of his rage and resentment? And what then shall we think must be the sentiments of Christ our Lord and judge, when he sees a virgin dedicated to his service, and professing an uncommon sanctity, lying in the same bed with a man? What a provocation must this be to him, and how dreadful are his menaces against such an unlawful commerce? The effects of which, in his terrible judgment, we ought, all of us, to be careful in our endeavours, that each of our brethren may finally avoid.

3. Now as all of us should labour in preserving the rule of discipline and good manners inviolate; so a more especial care should herein be taken by the prelates and deacons of the church, who should set others an example and pattern of all holy conversation. For how will it be possible for them to prescribe rules of purity for others, who, themselves, are tainted, and whose practice gives the first sample of corruption? Wherefore, dear brother, you have acted upon this occasion, with an equal measure of prudence and firmness, by excommunicating the deacon who was often found guilty of this fact, as well as those other persons who had committed the same. If these virgins duly submit to a course of penance, for their scandalous misbehaviour, and continue thenceforwards separate from the other sex; let them be searched in the interim, and upon their being found untouched, they may be re-admitted to the communion of the church; yet under the restraints of the following condition; that if ever

since the councils of *Ancyra* and *Nice* did afterwards interpose in it; and yet it is apparent from *Chrysostom*, who hath two orations to these *Conciliaris*, both men and women, that it was not quite abolished in his time, though it was always insisted on, that their commerce was innocent, and we see them in this case willing to abide a search. The *Platonists* notion of love might very probably give rise and encouragement to this very suspected practice. N. B. Mr. *Dodwell* thinks this epistle written after the persecution, from the mention of *Tertullus* in it as a bishop; whom from ep. 5. and 12. he supposes to have been at this time a presbyter; but I see no reason in those epistles for any such inference.

¹ *Professions of dedicating.*] Those were no vows. See the notes referred to before on §. 3. of the habit of virgins; with what here follows of a permission to them to marry, if they found they could not persevere in their profession and purpose of chastity without it.

^m *By excommunicating the deacon.*] In the 4th century, the course was usually to depose the clergy for those crimes, which were punished in the laity with segregation. They thought it then not reasonable to punish the same fault both with deposition and segregation. And indeed the 25th of the apostolick canons hath so directed, a good deal earlier than the 4th century; but then the 54th of the same, hath imposed even segregation as a punishment upon the clergy. In the 3^d of *Basil* to *Amphilochius*, we have the sentence of the 25th apostolick canon confirmed, that the same fault was not to have two punishments; though generally for higher crimes, it must be confessed, the antients were more severe, and the clergy who committed them, were both deposed and excommunicated, as *Paulus*, bishop of *Sarragata* manifestly was.

they

A. D. 249.
Epistle IV.

they are found returning to the men with whom they so accompanied, or living in the same house, and under the same roof with them, they shall then be subject to "an *higher penalty*, and shall not be received again into the church, without great difficulty. As to those, who shall appear, upon search, to have been corrupted, they must be adjudged to the very ° *highest degree* of penitential rigours; because she, who hath been guilty of such a crime as this, tho' she hath no husband to make her an adulteress, yet, is to be ranked in the same class, as having ^p broken her faith which she had plighted to Christ; wherefore she must be content with continuing out her full time under discipline; and then upon her ^q humble confession, she may be restored to the communion of the church. But if such will not submit, nor part from the men, with whom they live so scandalously, they should be told, that with such impudence and obstinacy together, they are ^r never to be restored, nor reconciled, lest the example of their sin prove contagious, and draw in others to partake of its guilt and punishment.

§. 4.
That the sin
of schism is
capital, but
that the sword
which punish-
eth it, is spi-
ritual.
Deut. 17. 12,
13.

4. Nor let any presume to think themselves safe in the way of life and salvation, who will not hearken to their bishops and priests; when they may hear God himself declaring in the book of *Deuteronomy*, That the man who will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge, who shall be in those days, even that man shall dye; and all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously: Where we see that God hath commanded such to be slain, as obeyed not his priests, as refused to hearken to his judges, who should be appointed for the time being; then indeed the temporal sword took vengeance of them, as the carnal circumcision stood then in force; but now that a spiritual circumcision hath begun to take place among the faithful servants of God; the presumptuous and obstinate amongst us, are put to death by the sword of the Spirit, and by being cast out of his church. For there can indeed be ^s no life out of it; since the house of God is one only, and none can be saved, who are duly ejected out of his church. But now that such as will not submit to discipline, nor obey wholsom counsel, are lost by rejecting it, the holy scripture hath clearly testified, where it tells us, That an undisciplined person hateth one who reproveth him; and that they who hate reproof, shall come to a shameful end. Wherefore, dear brother, we exhort you to use your best endeavours, that no one be lost for want of reproof and discipline; but that the whole

Prov. 15. 12,
10.

ⁿ An higher penalty.] It had been already mentioned, as expected from them, that they should agere penitentiam; i. e. submit to some degree of penitential rigours; of which there were several degrees and stations; and our author seems here to have alluded to three of them; he had mentioned in general their performance of penance, for which the general word was penitentia, or poenitentia; and seems to have intended the state of prostration, when the penitent entered more particularly into the care of the church. The station next it was that of hearers, which seems to have been this higher penalty, here alluded to by our author; beyond that was the station of the mourners, which seems to have been farther threatened by our author, under the name of full penance.

° Highest degree of penitential rigours.] Or, as our author here called it, Poenitentia plena, full penance; i. e. when the penitent went thro' all the stages of penance, and was continued under each, during its full period; which it was in the power of the bishop to mitigate, or insist on, as he should judge the case to require. A fourth stage obtained in the 4th century, and was called the station of confiteantes, or by-standers; all which are mentioned in can. 22. of Basil, ad Amphilocho. cited in part 1. chap. 2. §. 2. of the penitential discipline, where this whole argument is more copiously handled; and in Greg. Nyssen. can. epist. translat. ibid. in append. No. 1.

^p Broken her faith.] Viz. as she had professed to live in a virginal state, tho' she had made no vow of it; yet this in a rhetorical exaggeration was called breach of faith, or an inconsistency with her professions; nay, even in a stricter sense, it was breach of faith; inasmuch as whilst she continued in the church, under the notion of a virgin, and claimed the honours which at that time were paid to such a profession, she broke in upon all sort of rule, by suffering her chastity to be corrupted, and yet continuing under that profession, without exchanging it, as she might lawfully have done, for a married state. See note on §. 2. [professions of dedicating] with what is there referred to.

^q Humble confession.] This was that solemn confession in the face of the church, which was always made by penitents before their restoration to the peace of it.

^r Never to be restored.] This was therefore the highest sentence of excommunication, pronounced upon the obstinate and incorrigible; under which the person was admitted to no station of penance, but was as utterly neglected as a mere heathen; so the constitutions have directed, b. 2. ch. 41.

^s No life out of it.] Observe the stress which is here laid upon communion with the church.

brother-

brotherhood with you, may, by the advantage of your wholsom counsels, be directed and forwarded in the way of salvation. *For strait indeed is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life;* but then great is the reward we shall meet with, when we have pressed thro' it unto glory. *Let such as have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake,* be-
have within rule and character, endeavouring to please God in all things; and not offend either his bishops, or his church, by any bad example, or corrupt practice; and tho' they may seem at present to have been 'grieved by us, yet let not us depart from a persuasion so highly conducive to the interests of the church committed to our care; nor forget what the apostle once said to his people upon a like occasion; *Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?* If our brethren will hearken to us upon this occasion, we shall have the satisfaction of having gained them, of having brought them within the paths of honour and virtue, by our applications to them. But if there should be any so perverse and stubborn, as to stand out against us, we should take the same apostle for our example, who said, *If I should please men, I should not be the servant of Christ:* Wherefore if there be any whom we cannot prevail upon to please Christ, all which remains for us, will be so to order our own conduct, in this and each other particular, that we may, for our selves, please 'Christ, our Lord and God, by adhering inviolably to the rule of his commandments. And now, dear brother, we have nothing farther, but only to bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 249.
Epistle IV.
Matt. 7. 14.

Matt. 19. 11.

Gal. 4. 16.

Gal. 1. 10.

* *Grieved.*] Our author seems to have had in view the case of the incestuous Corinthian, whom he grieved or made to mourn, 1 Cor. 5. and 2 Cor. 2. Bishop Fell.

† *Christ our Lord and God.*] Observe the high character given here of Christ.



EPISTLE V.

A. D. 250.
Epistle V.

Was written about the beginning of the Decian persecution, which began in Africa with a popular tumult, the people in a rage demanding St. Cyprian by name to be exposed to the lions; whereupon he was proscribed, (i.e. in effect, outlawed) and he fled for it to a place of safety; which in his book upon the case of the lapsed, he takes all occasions either of justifying, or excusing; and when he was settled there, he wrote this fifth epistle to his clergy, directing them in what manner to supply his absence, during the present exigence. Our right reverend annalist and editor are both agreed in assigning this epistle to the year 250.

Written in his retirement.

CYPRIAN to his dear brethren, 'his presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.



HRO' the protection and blessing of Almighty God, I am enabled to write to you, my dear brethren, from a place of safety; where I take great pleasure in hearing, that every thing with you is safe and well. Now since the 'present posture of affairs, will

§. 1.

* *Presbyters and deacons.*] Upon these he devolves the care of his church, with the duties which he was used to perform in his own person. Where the reader will, I hope, observe, his superior government, and their subordinate management.

† *Present posture of affairs.*] *Viz.* that tumultuous disposition of the populace of Carthage, which had already called for his blood.

A. D. 250.
Epistle V.

not suffer me to be upon the spot with you, I conjure you by all the eyes of religion, and of the trust reposed in you, that you would be strict and diligent in the performance of your own, and my duty; and that no complaint may arise from any deficiencies in point of discipline or order. As to a supply of their necessities, who are either imprisoned for their courageous and gallant confession of their faith in Christ, or otherwise in distress and want, and yet abide by the truth as it is in Jesus; I beseech you, that there be no neglect of them, and that no care on your parts be wanting in your provision for them; since the whole sum was cast up, which was appropriated to such uses, and distributed in fit proportions among the clergy, to be by them applied to such occasional emergencies; that what should be necessary to be so expended might be lodged in diverse hands, for the convenience of such as should severally be entitled to it.

§ 2.
Prudence in
visiting the
confessors, who
were imprisoned,
recommended.

2. I must yet farther recommend to you, the use of all prudential endeavours to keep things quiet and easy; for altho' I am very sensible that our brethren are exceedingly fond of expressing their affections to our worthy confessors by visiting them frequently, (in regard to the honour vouchsafed them from heaven, of having already commenced^d in some measure martyrs,) yet I should think this were best done with caution and reserve; that our brethren, I mean, should not crowd together in companies upon this occasion, but should rather go singly and separately, for fear of giving offence or umbrage, and thereby of being denied admittance, and finally of losing all their present privilege, by an imprudent indulgence to themselves in an improper use of it. Wherefore my advice to you is, that this point be managed with caution and temper, and with more regard to safety; and accordingly that the presbyters who^e celebrate the holy eucharist, with these confessors, may severally take their turns, and that a new one may each day attend^f with a new deacon; because by such a reciprocation and change of persons, there will be less appearance of design, the thing will be less invidious, and less suspicion will attend it. For we ought always to be meek and lowly, as becomes the servants of God, to^g give way to the times, to make them as easy

Rom. 12. 11.

^c The whole sum.] As the price of lands, which were sold for the necessities of the first christians, was laid at the apostles feet, and from thence distribution was made unto every man according as he had need; (Acts 4. 35.) So in after-times were the oblations of the faithful deposited with the bishop, who had one part for himself, a second for his clergy, and a third for the poor. This part St. Cyprian had left with his clergy, to be distributed by them among such as in his absence should want a share of it. N. B. Justin Martyr in his apology, hath clearly asserted this trust to be lodged with the *ἐπίσκοπος*, or bishop. Bp. Fell. See note [the poor of the church] in §. 4. of the case of the lapsed, and note [virgins] in §. 3. habit of virgins.

^d In some measure martyrs.] Viz. By having witnessed a good confession, and suffered already for it, though not unto death. These were the glorious beginnings meant by our author, the sufferings which prefigured their martyrdom. See note [martyrs and confessors] in epist. 10.

^e Celebrate the holy eucharist.] *Apud confessores offerant*, are our author's words. Now though *offerre*, or oblation, was really a different act, from that of *consecration*; yet because they always attended each other, and no one came before the Lord empty, or received the communion, without making his oblation; therefore the whole office took its name sometimes from one, and sometimes from another part of it; and no one was admitted to the *εὐχαριστία*, the oblation, who was not likewise admitted to communion, and so *vice versa*. And therefore we find that a presbyter with his deacon, was cast out of communion for communicating with the lapsed, and offering their oblations. The communicant therefore made his oblation to the priest, and he offered it to God; and that particular presbyter there referred to in epist. 34. was censured for accepting in God's name, the oblation of persons, not entitled to make it. Bp. Fell.

^f With a new deacon.] Observe here, as well as from the preceding instance, referred to in epist. 34. that each presbyter had a deacon joined with him in the celebration of these holy mysteries. Observe moreover, that the number of deacons and presbyters, over whom St. Cyprian, as their bishop, presided, could not be small, if new faces and persons could every day be spared out of it, for attending the confessors in their prisons. Observe yet farther, that the holy eucharist was every day received by these confessors.

^g Give way to the times.] *Temporibus servare*. I make this (with our right reverend editor) allude to Rom. 12. 11. the reading of which, at present, is *serving the Lord*: But there is great probability, that *σὺν*, which was the original abbreviation, might stand for *συνεῖν*, as well as *συνεῖν*; and might mean a sense somewhat like that which was contained in the advice elsewhere given by this very apostle, (Ephes. 5. 16.) of *redeeming the time*; of gaining what farther time they honestly could in life, by the prudence of their behaviours. The learned reader may consult Dr. Miller upon the place, and see great authorities produced in favour of this construction.

to us as we can, and to provide for the welfare of our people. My dear brethren, I long to be with you; mean while you have my hearty wishes and prayers for your prosperity, and my desires that you would preserve a remembrance of me: Recommend me to all our brethren. *Victor*, my deacon, and the rest who are here with me, are all at your service. Farewel.

A. D. 250.
Epistle VI.



EPISTLE VI.

From some words which our author hath dropt towards the conclusion of this epistle, Pamelius was induced to think, that Rogatianus, whose name it is inscribed to, had suffered martyrdom, at the time when it was edited; and therefore, since it is otherwise certain, that Rogatianus survived the Decian persecution; Pamelius was for postponing the date of this epistle till our author's banishment, which a little preceded his martyrdom, and for adding in the inscription, to the name of Rogatianus, the word junior, to distinguish him from the elder Rogatianus, whom he supposed our author to have mentioned as dead, when he wrote this epistle. But as it will, I presume, appear, that no such consequence necessarily results from our author's words; and as the said Rogatianus might be still alive, notwithstanding what is here said of him; the character of junior, in the inscription of the epistle, seems, therefore, needless; (and we know that the inscriptions have no authority to vouch for them besides that of the several copyers) so that upon the whole, I am for placing this epistle in the same year, and for referring it to the same occasion with the foregoing one, as our right reverend annalist and editor have done before me. The occasion of writing it, appears in the body of it to have been congratulating those who had confessed the name of Christ in time of danger, and exhorting them to persevere even unto the death.

CYPRIAN to Sergius, Rogatianus, and the rest of the confessors, suffering for the name of Christ, wisheth all manner of prosperity.



Take this opportunity, my dear brethren, of presenting you with my truest and best respects, and of acquainting you with my earnest desires to see your faces, and to enjoy your conversation, if the posture of our affairs, and the disposition of the people, would suffer me to come amongst you. For surely there could nothing fall out more agreeable to my wishes, than to kiss those hands, which you have preserved so pure and innocent, in such a strict and firm adherence to your holy religion, and so utterly unpolluted by any foul compliances with heathen sacrifice. Nothing could be more suitable to the most ardent longings of my soul, nor better answer my highest ambition, than to salute those lips, which have so gloriously confessed their Lord and Saviour, in the article of danger; and to have the honour of those eyes beholding me, which have

§. 1.

* *Posture of affairs.*] See this noted in the preceding epistle, §. 1.

A. D. 250.
Epistle VI.

looked down upon the world with contempt and scorn, and fitted themselves thereby for seeing God. But since this is an happiness which the iniquity of the times denies to me; this letter must supply the place of my person, and address it self to you in my stead, and at once congratulate your auspicious beginnings, and exhort you to persevere, with stedfastness and courage, in the glorious track which you have begun to walk in; till at length you are led by it to reap the blessed fruits of your labour, and to the attainment of that crown which is the appointed recompence of your fortitude and patience. You have our

Matt. 28. 10.

Lord, you know, for your protector and leader; who hath said; *Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* Happy that prison! which is honoured with your presence, and which dispatches the servants of God to his kingdom and glory! How doth the darkness of its lowest dungeon exceed the brightness of the sun it self, and all the inferior luminaries which adorn the world; whilst it contains in it the temples of the most high God, and the members which have been sanctified by a confession of his holy name! You have henceforwards no other business to employ your thoughts, but meditating upon those heavenly precepts wherewith the Holy Ghost hath all along prepared, and armed you for the day of trial. Death should not be suffered to terrify you; but life and immortality should encourage you; the affliction of a moment should be over-looked by you, whilst you are entertained with such a noble view beyond it, of an eternal weight of glory: You well

Psal. 116. 15.

remember what is written, that *the death of his saints is precious in the sight of the Lord.* And again; *A broken spirit is a sacrifice to God; a broken and contrite heart he will not despise:* And again, where holy scripture makes mention of those torments, which are, as it were, the formal acts of consecration, devoting the martyrs of God to his service, and sanctifying them thereunto, by the trial of their virtues in the furnace of affliction, we find the following account of them; *Though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality; and having been a little chastised they shall be greatly rewarded; for God hath proved them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering; and in time there shall be a due regard to them. They shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever.*

Wisd. 3. 4, 5,
6, 7, 8.

§. 2.
That the joy
conceived up-
on what they
hoped for
hereafter,
should make
them despise
what they
felt here.
Genes. 4. 8.

2. Wherefore, when you consider, that you are to reign hereafter with Christ, and to sit with him in judgment; you cannot but hence conceive a joy, which will enable you to despise any pains or punishments which may be here inflicted on you; as remembering that this hath ever been the fate of righteousness and righteous persons, from the very beginning of the world, to suffer in it, and to have various conflicts with the powers of it; and that we may trace this course of things from *righteous Abel*, who died a violent death, thro' a long train of other righteous men and prophets, down to the apostles of Christ, who were sent by him. To these our Lord set forth himself as an example, shewing them, that they who would attain to his kingdom, must follow him in the path which he had marked out for them; and tel-

John 12. 25.

ling them in the words of the gospel; *He that loveth his life in this world, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto*

Matt. 10. 28.

life eternal. And again; *Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The apostle St. Paul hath likewise exhorted us, that as

^a *The members.*] Viz. those mouths, and lips, and tongues, which had made such a glorious confession.

^c *A broken spirit is a sacrifice to God.*] Our author seems to have designed, that *sacrifice* should be the predicate, as indeed the LXX before him seem to have intended, by putting it *Θεῷ* in the dative, (to God,) and not, as we do, in the genitive, (of God;) and thus his encomium of these confessors is best hit off, by saying, that their present troubles, made them acceptable *sacrifices* to God; and the words next following are clear for this construction.

we desire to partake of our Lord's promises, we should in every thing follow his example; *We* (saith he) *are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.* To which he hath subjoined a comparison between the issues of the present time, and of the glory which hereafter waits us. *The sufferings* (saith he) *of the present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Wherefore whilst we are entertained with the prospect of this glory, it is but suitable to our character, to endure all persecution and trouble with patience and courage; inasmuch as, tho' *the afflictions of the righteous be many, yet they, who trust in God, are delivered out of all.*

A. D. 250.
Epistle VI.
Rom. 8. 16, 17.

18.

psal. 34. 19.

3. I congratulate yet farther with you, the company of those blessed women, who are sharers with you in the honour of your glorious confession; who, with a courage above their sex, have firmly adhered to the faith of Christ, and thence are not only, for *themselves*, upon the very next step to the crown of martyrdom, but have set also to *others* of their sex a noble example: And to fill up the measure of your honour, you have, thro' the grace of God, even children added to your number; so that no sex nor age is wanting to compleat it. Somewhat akin to your case was that of the three noble youths, *Ananias, Azarias, and Misael*; from whom, when they were shut up in the fiery furnace, the flames retreated, and they were refreshed, the Lord giving them his company, and with it an intimation, that the fire of hell can have no power over his martyrs and confessors; but that they who believe in God, shall for ever continue in a state of security. Upon this occasion it will be perfectly agreeable to your religious dispositions to consider, somewhat more particularly, the faith of these children, which recommended them to so high a pitch of favour with God. They were prepared, as we ought (each of us) to be, for all events; and they spake accordingly to the King, and said; *O Nebuchodonosor, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; for our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O King: But if not; be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up.* Tho' they had a full persuasion, and their faith assured them, that their deliverance from the present danger was far from an *impossibility*; yet they would not boast of it as a *certainty*, nor claim it as a due; *if not*, say they; whereby they meant and intimated, that they were for submitting to the worst which might befall them; nor had the virtue of their confession been so truly laudable, if it had not been accompanied with this proof of their readiness to suffer. They added indeed, that God was able to do every thing for them; but yet they were not assured he would exert his power in their present deliverance; only they were secure of it in futurity, and entertained themselves with the assured hope of eternal glory. Let this faith of *theirs* make due impressions upon *us* also; let it be the subject of our meditations day and night; and let our hearts be, as theirs were, devoted always to God, and to his service; let us despise things present, and look up to our future inheritance; even to the joys we expect in the kingdom of glory; the embraces^d and welcome we shall receive from our Lord, and the bliss we shall partake of in seeing God. Thus may you follow in every point, that *glorious old presbyter*

§. 3.
Women and children admitted to the honour of martyrdom.

Sing of the three children
§. 25, 26.

Dan. 3. 16,
17, 18.

Roga-

^d Embraces and welcome.] *Complexum & osculum Domini.* The Jewish theology run high in its encomiums of this *osculum Domini*, the *kiss of the Lord*; which they interpreted of a quiet and easy death; such as they say that of *Moses* was. But the most violent death on the contrary, was esteemed most desirable by christians, and best entitled to the character of being attended with *osculum Domini*, the *kiss of the Lord.* Bishop Fell.

^e Glorious old presbyter.] What is here said of *Rogatianus* doth at most intimate no more, than that he stood foremost in the danger, to which these confessors were exposed, as having signalized himself by standing the first brunt of popular fury. But had this *Rogatianus* now been dead, our author would not

A. D. 250.
Epistle VII.

Rogatianus, who is paving your way for you, by the firmness and constancy of his behaviour, and, thro' a peculiar measure of grace, adding fresh honours to our age and times; who, together with our brother *Felicissimus*, a man always quiet and orderly in his carriage, received the first outrages of the people, and prepared a place for you in your prison, as it were marking out the ground for you, and leading you still on, in every march you make, and in each encounter which you meet with. Now that you may all go on unto perfection; and, as you have already made a considerable step towards it by your confession, that you may finally reach the prize of the martyrs crown; is our constant and continual prayer to the throne of grace. My dear and blessed brethren in the Lord, I heartily wish you well; and that God would vouchsafe you the crown of his heavenly glory.

have said of him, as he doth, *viam facientem*, but *qui viam fecit*; and as to the words, *nunc quoque antecedit*; this means his being first in the honour of confession and imprisonment. Nor is it of any importance, that he is named in the third person; for still he might be one of those, to whom the epistle is inscribed; and being so distinguished a person, might with propriety enough be singled out from the rest, and his case be more particularly mentioned, than any others. His marking out the ground, alludes to the office of those, who did the same for the encampment of armies.



EPISTLE VII.

Written in his
retirement.

Pamelius judged this to have been written towards the conclusion of our author's retirement, because the tenour of it is so much the same with that of his 5th epistle, which he supposed would not have been so soon repeated; at least, if there be no other key to let us into the date of it, he conceived it more probable, that the substance of the 5th epistle should be repeated at a greater distance of time, than what our right reverend annalist and editor have assigned to it; who place this epistle next but one in order to the 5th. I cannot but say, that the conjecture of Pamelius seems to me reasonable; nor is it opposed by any seeming references in the 14th and 20th epistles, to the argument of this: For the argument of this epistle, being so much the same with the argument of the 5th, those references may as well belong to the 5th as to this. And then since we have no other clue to lead us; the similitude of the subject is a reason for placing the one at a farther distance from the other. Yet because in a matter so conjectural as the date of our author's epistles usually is, I would not break in upon the order of the edition which I follow; I suffer this epistle to stand in the year there assigned to it, though my own opinion is rather, in this particular, with Pamelius.

CYPRIAN to his dear brethren, the presbyters and deacons,
sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



Present you, my dear brethren, with my kindest remembrances, and I bless God, my person is yet in safety; I long for an opportunity of returning to you speedily, which would be as agreeable to my wishes as it can be to yours, or to any of our brethren: But yet I think it my duty to let the consideration of publick quiet have its weight with me; and therefore to absent my self for a season from you,

you, how grievous soever such absence is to me, lest ^a my presence should provoke the rage and fury of the heathens to break out upon you; and so I, who ought, above others, to take the most especial care of the publick tranquillity, should, in effect, be found the disturber of it. Wherefore, whenever I hear, from you, that things are settled, and that I may come amongst you without a likelihood of throwing them back again into confusion; or if God should otherwise ^b vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure in this particular, I will be sure to hasten to you: For surely nothing could fall out more agreeable to my most ardent desires, than to be found upon that spot, where it pleased God, of his infinite mercy, to make me first a believer, and then a bishop. Mean while I intreat you, that the widows, the disabled, and in general all your poor, may be provided for by you with all diligence; and if there be any strangers amongst you, in distress, these, I desire, may be furnished out of ^c my proper portion, which I have lodged in the hands of *Rogatianus* ^d our brother presbyter; and lest that should all be spent, I have lent him a fresh recruit by *Naricus*, ^e our waiter, for the more liberal supply of all such occasions. My dear brethren, I pray always for your prosperity, and bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 250.
Epistle VII.

^a *My presence.*] Our author was a person so distinguished, and thought to serve the cause of christianity so effectually, that they who were enemies to the Religion, were the more fierce against the person of such an eminent professor; and therefore he was by name called for to the lions.

^b *Vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure.*] As to the subject of miracles continuing in the church, and among other supernatural gifts, of prophecies and visions; I might write a dissertation instead of notes, were I to trace the several evidences which speak full and home to this point, from the beginning of christianity down to the age of *Eusebius* and *Constantine*, in whose times (*viz.* when christianity had the support of human powers) these extraordinary assistances were discontinued. The very learned Mr. *Dodwel* hath traced the several evidences of this prophetick spirit, through almost every writer, from the apostolick age, to the forementioned period. From the author of the *Revelations* he passes through *Hermas*, *Clement*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Quadratus*, *Iustin*, *Melito*, *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, *Cyprian*, in divers parts of his works, (wherein we have frequent mention of the revelations made to him, upon various occasions) and in each of these authors, from their own works, either extant, or quoted by proper witnesses, he finds the continuance of this privilege with the christian church, in the several times wherein they wrote. Nor is it any objection to say, (because it was reasonable indeed to expect that there should, as) there did arise pretenders to this gift, who really had it not; such as *Montanus* and his followers. There were *discerners of spirits*, as well as prophetick spirits, and both endowed with supernatural gifts; the one as a check upon the other; that no falsity might be obtruded upon the church, under the colour of so great and venerable a privilege. See note [*token of his pleasure*] ep. 66. §. 7. with the text of the same.

^c *My proper portion.*] See what that was in note on epist. 5. [*whole sum*.]

^d *Our brother presbyter.*] *Compresbyterum nostrum*. This is no more a proof of an equality in order between bishop and presbyter, than a bishop at this time subscribing himself in a letter to a presbyter; your brother would prove, that we hold at this time no difference of order between the one and the other.

^e *Our waiter.*] *Acoluthum*.] None were admitted to serve, even in the lowest offices of the church, without a peculiar designation to their several employments, by the hands of the bishop. Hence we have several orders of the clergy, not indeed originally appointed by the apostles, (as bishops, priests, and deacons were) but yet fixed in such times, as had the Spirit of God operating after an extraordinary manner in several persons. And therefore I shall not easily think, that any error of consequence could in such times obtain, so as to be generally received, and handed down, with consent, to succeeding generations. See note [*subdeacon*] in the next epistle; and observe, moreover, what the sentiments of this time were, concerning all ecclesiastical transactions; that none might be concerned in them, but such as had a solemn appointment from the bishop before they were judged fit to be honoured with them.



A. D. 250.
Epistle VIII.



EPISTLE VIII.

Written during his retirement, and upon the vacancy of the see of Rome.

Was written in the year 250 by the Roman clergy, (whose bishop, Fabian, had just suffered martyrdom,) during the vacancy of their see; and sent to the clergy of Carthage, by Clementius their messenger, who had carried to Rome the news of St. Cyprian's retirement. The reader will hence observe the brotherly correspondence, between one church and another, and the interest which each understood it self to have in the whole christian community.

A LETTER from ^a the Clergy of Rome to the Clergy of Carthage, concerning the retirement of St. CYPRIAN.

§. 1.



WE have been informed by Clementius ^b the subdeacon, who is come to us from you upon that occasion, that the ^c blessed Pope Cyprian hath retired for a certain reason; wherein you seem to think he hath acted well and rightly, as being a distinguished person, and standing, as such, the more exposed in the day of trial, which was evidently then approaching. Such trials in this life are permitted by God, as proofs of our christian constancy and courage, in our conflicts with the grand enemy; and as fit spectacles both to men and angels; who may hence observe, that the conqueror in them hath his crown assigned him;

^a The clergy.] Tho' we know that the authority of these titles rises no higher than that of the several copyers, who affixed them; yet, because Rigaltius hath hence struck out into a kind of dissertation, attempting to prove, that there was originally no difference between laity and clergy, but that all were comprehended under one denomination; it may be fit to inform the less learned reader, that the difference obtained as early as the apostolick age; and besides the many footsteps of it, which appear in the writings of the New Testament, and in the advices of the apostles to their people, to obey them who had the rule over them in the Lord, and to submit themselves, for that they watched for their souls; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake; besides the directions given to Timothy and Titus with regard to elders, and to such as laboured in the word and doctrine; (I say besides all this) it is evident from Clemens Romanus; that even among the clergy themselves there were distinct offices and provinces; the bishop (who answered to the Jewish high-priest) had his; the presbyters, or priests, (who answered to the Jewish elders) had theirs; and the deacons (who corresponded to the Levites under the law) had also their peculiar charges; and the laity had moreover their rules and laws, by which they were to be directed, in epist. 1. to Corinth. §. 40. The whole people of Israel were called a kingdom of priests, Exod. 19. 6. i. e. with regard to the nations round about them; but yet no man will be so hardy as to say, that they had not a priesthood within themselves, which was not common to their laity; and so when St. Peter calls the whole body of christians, an holy, a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. we must understand him in the comparison with other people; but yet we are otherwise sure, that he did not exclude a proper priesthood from christians among themselves.

^b The subdeacon.] Here again Rigaltius falls upon his old complaint of the pride which was growing among church-men; and of the increase of officers with it. He observes, that the apostles constituted only deacons; but that this age had its subdeacons; and the next added its archdeacons; that the apostles knew none but the names of bishops and presbyters; but that the subsequent ages had their archbishops and patriarchs. And where, with his leave, is the bad consequence of this, if it serves to the uses of edifying and order? Where was the harm of that deference, e. g. which was paid to our author as bishop of the chief church in Africa? Did not that whole oeconomy minister apparently to excellent purposes, and to preserve the body of Christ in health and vigour? These lower offices of subdeacon, reader, waiter, door-keeper, &c. were added in process of time, as the occasions of the church were severally multiplied, and called for more assistance; and the addition of them was perfectly within the compass of the bishops commission. Cornelius, in a letter to Fabian of Antioch, extant in Eusebius, (b. 6. c. 43.) hath mentioned 46 presbyters, 7 deacons, 7 subdeacons, 42 waiters; exorcists, readers, and door-keepers, 52: With above 1500 widows, and people in distress, maintained in this very age, by the treasure of the Roman church. (Bishop Fell.) See note the last [our waiter] in the preceding epistle.

^c Blessed Pope Cyprian.] This appellation of papa, meant originally no more than pater, or father; even as our familiar mamma, means mater, or mother; and was antiently applied alike to all bishops, or those however of the greater sees; as father was the common name of honour to senators among the

him; as ^d the vanquished lieth under the sentence we are all acquainted with. A. D. 250. Epistle VIII.
And as we apprehend it incumbent upon us, to take care of the flock committed to our management, ^e in the stead, and during our present want, of a bishop; so, if we are found tardy in the execution of this important trust, we are aware the same reproof will be given us, which ^f our predecessors received upon a like occasion; viz. *That we did not seek that which was lost; nor bring again that which strayed; nor bind up that which was broken; but have eaten up their milk, and cloathed our selves with their wooll.* Ezek. 34. 34.
Our Lord himself, who came to fulfil what was written in the law and the prophets, hath also taught us, saying; *I am the good shepherd; who lay down my life for the sheep; but he that is an hireling, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth; and the wolf scattereth the sheep:* John 10. 11; 12.
And again we may read him saying to Simon; *Lovest thou me? He answered; I do love thee. Jesus saith unto him; Feed my sheep.* John 21. 15.
Our Lord, we know, thus spake to Peter, after he had kept ^g aloof from him [when the Jews had apprehended him] and the other disciples soon followed his example; [and (as the scriptures have informed us) forsook him, and fled.]

2. We should be very unwilling, dear brethren, to have you found *hirelings*, instead of *good shepherds*; in as much as you cannot but know, what danger you incur by neglecting to give your people due admonitions and exhortations to stand firm in the principles of their most holy faith; and what just cause of apprehension there is, that your people so neglected will fall headlong into idolatry, and so be utterly subverted. Nor do we thus take upon us to exhort you in word only, but you may easily inform your selves from such as pass between us and you, that our practice hath all along been, and is still agreeable thereunto: How, by the assistance of God, we take all possible care in discharging our trust, notwithstanding any worldly danger which may attend our so doing; as having before our eyes the fear of God, and the terror of his menaces, more than the fear of men, or of any damage we can sustain from their attempts against us; accordingly we do not leave our brethren to themselves in these perilous times, but exhort them, continually, to stand fast in the faith of the gospel, and press it upon them, for duty, to hold themselves always in readiness for following the Lord, [whensoever, or howsoever he shall think fit to call them.] ^h By the efficacy and power of our exhortations, and by the examples

§. 2.
That pastors should be very careful not to be mercenary

the Romans; or presbyters, to the next order of clergy among christians; the Roman bishop had herein no singular prerogative, till Pope Gregory vii. in the 11th century, would needs appropriate that title to his own see. Rigaltius.

^d The vanquished.] This, with the following quotations from Ezekiel and St. John, seems to bear a little upon St. Cyprian's conduct in retiring; as indeed all who had read Tertullian's book of flight in persecution were inclined to censure him. Of which our author was fully sensible, and therefore upon all occasions laboured to vindicate himself, and to give the reasons of his conduct.

^e In the stead.] What the power of the presbytery was during the vacancy of an episcopal see, will be farther observed in note on epistle 30. §. 7.

^f Our predecessors.] Viz. the governors of the church of God, whilst under the Mosaic œconomy; now if they were the predecessors of christian bishops; the consequence, I think, is clear, that the church was still under christianity, the same numerical church which it was under Judaism, only with a diversity of administration.

^g Kept aloof from him.] Ex actu ipso quo cessit. The Roman clergy do not here allude to Peter's denial of our Saviour, but rather to his following him afar off, (Matt. 26. 58.) which better quadrated with our author's case, upon whom they designed to glance their reflection. Our Lord (they say) thus spake to him; i. e. called him Simon, not Peter, which latter name alluded to the firmness of petra, a rock, and therefore was not at all suitable to that cowardice, which here made our Saviour seem to doubt of his future constancy. N. B. Dionysius Alexandrinus (as bishop Fell observes) was much about the same time with our author, under the same circumstances, and had retired, as he did; and pleaded the same excuse, of a divine admonition, Euseb. b. 6. c. 40. see note [vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure] in the preceding epistle. I have added the words within the hooks [] as explanatory to our author's text.

^h By the efficacy, &c.] This whole sentence stands otherwise in Pamelius and Rigaltius, who make it exceedingly obscure; our editor following the copy of Lasinius, hath a little mended it; though he hath not quite cleared it of all obscurity. But indeed the whole epistle is written with less simplicity, and therefore with more obscurity, than any of our author's. The learned reader may try whether he can set the meaning of the Roman clergy in a better light, upon the perusal of their words,

A. D. 250.
Epistle VIII.

examples of our firm adherence to our professions, we have recovered to our church those, who were going up to the capitol by compulsion; although some indeed, through human frailty and fear, or because they were distinguished persons, [and so the more noted] have fallen [in this sore trial] whom yet we do not forsake, when so separated from us; but we persevere in our persuasives to them, that they would submit to penance for their grievous sin, ^k if perchance they may find pardon for it, from him who can make it good to them; and this we do, lest if we should quite abandon them, they should grow the worse for it, [and become at length quite desperate and hardened]. You see therefore, brethren, that there is the like reason for your doing the same; that so they who once have lapsed upon this occasion, may, through your endeavours with them, correct their error; and if they happen to be brought again to the rest, may be induced to make a gallant confession of their faith, and thereby atone for their former cowardice.

§. 3.
Directions
how to pro-
vide for the
lapsed, the wi-
dows, and
other distressed
persons.

3. ^l We have added, moreover, whatever else we could judge incumbent upon you to do in this juncture; if any therefore who have been foiled in this encounter, shall be taken with a sudden sickness, and shall duly testify their sorrow for their sin, and desire admittance to the holy communion, you ought, (we think) in such case, to assist them. The widows also, and they upon a sick bed, who cannot go abroad; they who are in prison, or forced from their habitations, ought likewise to have due provision made for them, and the attendance of proper ministers. The ^m catechumens likewise, who may happen to fall sick upon the sudden, will deserve your endeavours, that they be not disappointed, nor destitute of a suitable relief in their several extremities. And, above all, you should consider the great danger which hangs over their heads, whose proper business it is to take care of that matter, if the bodies of the martyrs, or other dead persons, be suffered to ⁿ lie unburied. By whomsoever, therefore, or upon whatsoever occasion this good work shall be performed; we are sure, that servant who performs it, will be accounted a good one, as *having been faithful in a very little*, and will have authority given him *over ten cities*. And we pray God, who can do every thing, to grant, that we may be found by him occupied in these works. Our brethren, who are imprisoned, salute you; so do our presbyters, and the whole church of God amongst us, which continues instant in watching and in prayer, for all them who call upon the name of the Lord. We, for our parts, desire in return, your re-

Luke 19. 17.

which are these; *Sed et ascendentes ad hoc quod compellebantur, revocavimus ad ecclesiam istam fortiter in fide.* N. B. Their going up to the capitol was in order to sacrifice there.

ⁱ *Because they were distinguished persons.*] This, again, is a reflection glanced upon our author, whose excuse for his retirement, was his being a distinguished person, and thence the more exposed to the rage of the persecution.

^k *If perchance they may find pardon.*] So that it should seem hence, there was yet no established rule for the admittance of idolaters to communion; though there was soon after. But this being a matter of discipline, was discretionally managed by different churches: Here, therefore, I would beg leave to correct an error, which I fell into, when I wrote the 2^d part of the 2^d chapter of the penitential discipline, §. 1. as to Tertullian's testimony; who did not (as I there represent him) object to the church, her admission of idolaters to her communion; but did indeed argue, that she might as well admit them as admit adulterers: So that all that time the African church did not admit idolaters to her communion. I cannot easily imagine how I could fall into such an error, except I were called off accidentally, whilst I was making my collections, and so broke off in the middle of the particular testimony there cited, which I have reason to think might have been my case.

^l *We have added moreover.*] All this was still in the way of *brotherly advice*, and not of *authority*; though it is no wonder, that a church which enjoyed at that time such great advantages, should claim, and have more respect, than others. See note [my colleague] in the next epistle.

^m *Catechumens.*] i. e. Candidates for baptism, which the clergy of room here appear solicitous, that they should not want if they were in danger of death. Though these clinical, or sick-bed baptisms, had always some note of infamy fixed on them.

ⁿ *Lie unburied.*] This was ever thought a barbarity, and the christians of this age were plainly of the same opinion. *Tobit* we find (ch. 12. v. 12, 13.) commended by the angel for his care of burying the dead. *Abraham's* care of burying his wife, is recorded in *Gen.* 23. and *ibid.* c. 50. the same is recorded of *Joseph* burying his father, and of his solicitude for the place of his own burial.

membrance

membrance of us. We give you to understand, that ° *Bassianus* is arrived here safe; and we intreat you, who have a zeal for God, that you would transmit copies of this letter to as many as you can, and that you would take or make all proper occasions of communicating them; that so your brethren may be hence encouraged to abide by their holy profession, with all constancy and courage. Our dear brethren, you have our most hearty wishes, that all imaginable prosperity may ever attend you. Farewel.

A. D. 250.
Epistle VIII.

° *Bassianus*.] One, probably of the Roman clergy (saith *Pamelius*) sent; in all likelihood, from thence to the church of *Carthage*; and his safe return home is here intimated.



EPISTLE IX.

Epistle IX.

The same Clementius, who carried from Carthage to Rome, the news of our author's retirement; in the same year brought back with him letters from the Roman clergy, upon the vacancy of their see, to the clergy of Carthage, and likewise to our author. The preceding epistle hath given us a copy of the former; but the latter we have not extant. St. Cyprian here answers to both; but seems so far surprized at the tenour of them, that he desires a little farther satisfaction, as to the truth of them; which was a modest way of reprimanding that undue liberty, taken by the presbyters of Rome, in censuring the conduct of the bishop of Carthage.

Written in his retirement, and during the vacancy of the see of Rome:

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons of Rome, who stand fast in their most holy faith, sendeth greeting.

WHEN an uncertain report had for some time passed amongst us, concerning the departure of that excellent man, my colleague, and I knew not well what credit I might safely give to it; I received at last, my dear brethren, a letter from you, wherein I had a full account of his glorious exit; and it was no small satisfaction to me, thence to find, that he finished his days with so much honour, and with such a perfect conformity to the tenour of his preceding conduct. Herein I cannot but congratulate and rejoice with you, that you are so well disposed to adorn his memory with proper commendations, by bearing such full and ample testimony to the praise of it; that you at once acquaint me with what was so truly laudable and illustrious, in the character of your late bishop, and lay before me so fair a pattern of faith and constancy. For as the lapse of a bishop proves fatal to multitudes, who are apt to follow his example; so when that example is fit to be followed, and exhibits a specimen of firmness and

§. 11

° *My colleague*.] Whatever condescensions a superior might use to an inferior, in writing himself brother, or colleague to him, or in any other note of equality; yet the inferior never used such a style; and therefore if our author had acknowledged himself in any respect inferior to the bishop of Rome, he would never have assumed the title of his colleague, which was such a character of equality in office, as was between tribunes, or consuls, or any other joint-administrators of one and the same office. Now if pope *Cyprian* were equal in office to pope *Fabian* (the bishop of Rome who had so lately suffered martyrdom) their several presbyters must needs have been upon a foot of equality with each other; and so neither the one nor the other could claim a right of government over their brethren; but whatever past between them must have been in the way of brotherly counsel and correspondence.

courage,

A. D. 250.
Epistle IX.

courage, in adhering to the gospel; it carries with it a like proportion of usefulness and advantage to all who observe it. I have likewise perused^b a certain letter, wherein it doth not clearly appear to me, either who were the writers, or who the persons it was writ to. Yet as the^c subject matter of the said letter, with the manner of writing it, and^d even the paper it was writ upon, put me upon some thoughts, and some enquiries, whether it came to my hands entire, or without some alterations made in it; I have sent back to you the original letter for my farther satisfaction, and that I might see whether you would own it to be the very same *verbatim*, which you delivered to the subdeacon *Clementius*, or no. For it is a matter of great importance, and deserving our utmost care, that the letters which pass between the churches of Christ be not counterfeited, nor adulterated with any spurious mixture. Wherefore once more I desire you to look upon your letter, and see whether it be the very same which was endited by you, or by your order; and send me an exact account, which I may depend upon. My dear brethren, I bid you heartily farewell.

^b *A certain letter.*] *Viz.* The preceding letter of the Roman to the Carthaginian clergy, which, it seems, had neither subscription nor superscription to it; for fear (I suppose with bishop Fell) of its falling into the enemies hands, who sought at that time all occasions of complaint against them.

^c *Subject matter, &c.*] These all were circumstances moving our author to think the said letter genuine; only those harsh glances of reflection upon his conduct, which are legible in it, made him doubt whether it could come from them or no; but when he found it did, he then set himself in earnest to vindicate his own conduct to them in epist. 20. as to which he was silent, till he knew the certainty.

^d *Even the paper, &c.*] There were certain secret marks and characters whereby, in times of danger, one church, or bishop, corresponded with another. The apostle hath seemed to fix upon a *token* whereby his own epistles might be known, 2 *Thess.* 3. 17. and now the bishop who should have subscribed this epistle was dead, our author doubts of it; tho' it had (he saith) the other usual characters.



Epistle X.

EPISTLE X.

Written in
his retirement.

About the beginning of April, in this year, the arrival of the proconsul at Carthage, increased the heat of the persecution there; and diverse suffered by it, as confessors of the christian faith, with great gallantry and firmness, whom our author in this epistle encourages to proceed in their glorious conflict. Mappalicus, one of these, endured the torture upon the 16th of this month, and on the 17th became a glorious martyr, by resisting even unto blood, as did some others with him. Immediately upon this (which our author calls the present confession) the following epistle was written by him; and the main tenour of it speaks its purport, as well as the time wherein, and the occasion whereupon, it was endited.

CYPRIAN to the^a martyrs and confessors of Jesus Christ our Lord, sendeth greeting, in God the Father.



Am much transported, my truly courageous and blessed brethren, with the notices I have received of your faith and virtue, which prove such occasions of joy and triumph to the church of Christ, our common mother. To some degree these occasions indeed were

^a *Martyrs and confessors.*] Every one was a confessor, who upon the question put to him by the magistrate, owned himself a christian; but he only was a martyr, who made that confession, and persevered in making it, when put to the torture, in order to force a denial from him. All martyrs were therefore confessors, tho' all confessors were not martyrs; except in the sense wherein Tertullian called the confessors, martyrs elect, or candidates for the honour of martyrdom. Bishop Fell.

lately

lately given her, when her confessors stood to their glorious confession, and took upon themselves the punishment of it, which, they knew, would banish them from their several habitations; but yet ^b your present confession, as it exposes you to an higher penalty, so, entitles you to an higher degree of honour. For as the difficulties of your encounter are increased upon you, the glory of your conflict must be proportionably augmented; your apprehensions of the torture have been so far from inclining you to flinch from it, that your courage hath even been spirited by it, and you return with fresh vigour and resolution, to contend for the ^c highest prize of your holy calling; which ^d some of you, I find, have already attained to; others, I hear, are very near it; and all of you, who, so much to your honour, are under the same confinement, are animated with a like spirit of constancy and courage, and prepared for the same encounter, as soldiers of Christ should behave themselves in his camp; who should suffer no indulgences to betray the firmness of their faith; no menaces to affright them from it; nor anguish of torments to overpower it; inasmuch as we have, all, been told, That *greater* ^{1 John 4. 4.} *is he who is in us, than he who is in the world.* Nor can any pain or suffering from *this* world carry a greater force with it, to discourage and deject us, than the protection and comfort, which may be derived from the *other*, to raise and to support us. Experience hath proved thus much to us, in the glorious issue of the conflict which our brethren have severally been engaged in; who being set in the front of the battel, and exposed thereby to the first onsets of the torture, have given a noble specimen to the rest, of their gallantry and firmness, and have stood the trial so long, till they apparently proved too hard for it. What praises therefore shall I find out for you, my valiant brethren, which will come up to such distinguished merit? What topicks of panegyrick can sufficiently adorn such a courageous and steady perseverance? You persisted in enduring the severest torture, even to the highest pitch of honour; and were so far from yielding to *it*, that you forced it at length to yield to *you*. They, upon whom it was pushed to the last extremity, were relieved at length from it by the crown of martyrdom, when no other relief was given them. The length of its continuance made no disadvantageous impressions upon their faith, but only sent the servants of God a little sooner to their Master. Great numbers of spectators looked with astonishment upon this struggle for heaven, this spiritual encounter, this divine conflict, this christian engagement; wherein the servants of Christ stood boldly to their confession, with minds undisturbed, with a courage which none but God could inspire, without any weapons of this world, but trusting entirely to the armour wherewith their faith had furnished them. In the midst of torments, they were more undaunted than their very tormentors; their limbs, tho' racked and mangled, were, yet, too hard for the instruments which so racked and mangled them. No repetition of torments could break in upon their invincible constancy, tho' their very bowels were torn asunder, and no place was left for any *farther* wounds, but only for renewing and rearing up the *old* ones. Blood flowed from them in quantities sufficient, one would suppose, to have extinguished the flame of the persecution, or even of hell it self. O! what a sight was this, how truly august, and great, and

A. D. 250.
Epistle X:

^b Your present confession.] The punishment which the lower magistrates in these cases inflicted, reached no farther than to banishment; but when the proconsul arrived, (who had power of life and death) he added the torture, and in case of persisting, proceeded to blood. Our author calling this the *present confession*, shews us moreover, that he wrote in the midst of that severe trial. Bishop Fell.

^c Highest prize.] Viz. the crown of martyrdom. The sense therefore intended was plainly this; that after they had been put to the torture, they were so far from being thence discouraged, that they persisted in their confession, and thereby put in fair for the highest prize, which was the martyr's crown; and so esteemed by all antiquity.

^d Some of you.] Who these were, we shall learn from the epistle of *Lucian*, (No. 22.) viz. *Bassus*, *Mappalicus*, *Fortunio*, *Paulus*, *Fortuna*, *Victorinus*, *Victor*, *Herenius*, *Credulus*, *Herena*, *Donatus*, *Firminus*, *Pentus*, *Fructus*, *Julia*, *Martialis*, *Aristo*. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 250.
Epistle X.

Psal. 116. 15.

Mat. 10. 19.

h Isai. 7. 13.
14.

1 Cor. 9. 24,
25.

2 Tim. 4. 6,
7, 8.

§. 2.
The constancy
of Mappali-
cus and his as-
sociates.

acceptable in the sight of God, who could not but be pleased with the fidelity and fervour of such valiant soldiers! As we find it written for our instruction in the book of *psalms*, where the holy Ghost hath thus spoken; *Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.* And precious that death must surely be, of which ^e immortality is the price, and which receives ^f the immediate crown of its victorious virtue. What joy, do we think, must hence have sprung up in the mind of our redeemer? How willingly must we conceive him engaging in the support and protection of such faithful servants, in assisting them to be more than conquerors, and in furnishing them with all such reliefs and helps, as ^g the several proportions of their faith would enable them to take in? Thus was he present in the glorious encounter, encouraging, exciting, strengthening, those, who fought his battels, and made a gallant confession of his holy name. He who once overcame death for us, doth yet go on to overcome it in us. *When they deliver you up, said he, take no thought, how, or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak: For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* And indeed the present trial wherein you are engaged, hath verified the truth of this promise to us; for a word came forth from the mouth of the holy martyr *Mappallicus*, addressed to the proconsul in the midst of his torments, and saying; "To morrow you shall see a struggle which will be worth your seeing." What he thus gallantly undertook for, the Lord enabled him to perform; there *was* indeed the struggle he had so foretold, and the servant of God received his crown upon the successful issue of it. This is such a kind of struggle, as was foretold by the prophet *Isaiah*, saying; *It will be a small thing with you to contest with men, when God himself enters upon the proof of you,* [and puts you upon a struggle]. And to shew what kind of proof and struggle this was to be, and upon what occasion to be exerted; he goes on, and adds; *Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and ye shall call his name Immanuel.* This is that struggle, in which, when we come off victorious, we are entitled to our crown. This is that race, which the apostle *St. Paul* hath pointed to us, and directed us to run, and so to arrive at a crown of glory; *Know ye not (saith he) that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible.* Thus likewise, when he was pointing to his own personal struggle, and promising himself, that he should e'er long be a victim to his Lord and Saviour, he saith; *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing.*

2. Of this struggle, therefore, which was thus predicted by the prophets, appointed by our Lord, and gone through by his apostles, *Mappallicus* in his own, and in the name, of his associates, undertook to exhibit before the proconsul a glorious specimen. Nor was he worse than his word; he fought the

^e *Immortality is the price.* This, we are to consider, is a rhetorical panegyric, and therefore no doctrine of merit can be built upon it; which our author elsewhere hath sufficiently disclaimed. As, see note on §. 8. of the Lord's prayer [*no man of himself sufficiens*] and *ibid.* §. 10. note [*his favourable assistant*] and §. 4. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

^f *The immediate crown.* See §. last of the exhortation to martyrdom, where the martyr's title to his crown, without waiting for it till the day of judgment, is noted.

^g *The several proportions of their faith would enable them.* *Dans credentibus tantum, quantum se credit accipere, qui sumit.* So he had written before to *Donatus* in §. 14. [*quantum illuc fidei capax affirmit, tantum gratia inundantis haurimus.*] Bp. Fell. ad 101. ut in 100. videret. lxx. nonnigro tunc in hunc.

^h *Isaiah 7. 13.* See this cited and noted in §. 9. of the 2^d book of testimonies.

ⁱ *My departure.* See this cited and noted in §. 16. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

good fight which he had engaged for, and received the crown which he so well deserved. My exhortation to you at this juncture, which my heartiest wishes accompany, should be, to follow the example of that blessed martyr, and of those who have been partakers with him in the same glorious conflict, and associates with him in the constancy of his faith, in his patience under suffering, and in his victory upon all the trials he was put to; that so, as you were joined together in your bonds and imprisonment for the name of Christ, you may also be joined together in a common participation of the same reward and crown; that you may be the happy instruments of wiping off those tears from the eyes of your mother the church, which she sheds upon the ruins of her ^klapsed children; and of confirming the faith of such as stand yet untainted, by the influence and efficacy of your gallant example. If you are called out to the encounter, if the day of your trial comes; behave your selves valiantly, and fight it out courageously; as knowing, that our Lord is the spectator of your conduct, and will be the rewarder of such as persevere in the confession of his name; that he doth not stand by as a *mere* spectator of his servants labour and struggle; but labours himself, and struggles in them; and upon the successful issue of the conflict, doth, himself, both give and ^lreceive the crown.

A. D. 250.
Epistle X.

3. But if through the mercies of God, peace should be restored to his church before the day of the encounter; yet, let your wills continue well-affected, and your consciences give you the testimony of your good intentions; and let none of you be dejected, as falling short of those, who having overcome the world, are gone to their Lord in the glorious tract of martyrdom: For the Lord is a *searcher of the reins and hearts*; he sees their most secret recesses, and beholds their most inward and hidden purposes. The testimony of him who is to be your judge, and to assign it, will be sufficient to secure you the crown for which you are solicitous: Wherefore, my brethren, there is a great deal of honour and glory in both conditions: The *safer* is that which carries you to God immediately upon the success of your conflict; but the more *prosperous*, is that, which, after the honour of your confession, allows you a farther time, for continuing to adorn the church of Christ, and for flourishing in the midst of her eulogies and praises. I cannot enough congratulate to our church the happiness she enjoys, through the condescensive mercies of God to her, in being so adorned and illustrated with the blood of martyrs! The good works of her members represented her before, as cloathed in *white* raiment, which now the blood of the martyrs hath turned into a *purple*; so that amidst the various flowers which her garlands consist of; neither lilly nor rose are wanting: Wherefore the business now incumbent upon each of her members; is to contend for one or other of these two honours; either for the attainment of a *white crown* by good works, or for a *purple one*, by martyrdom. For in the camp of Christ, the day of *rest*, and the day of *battel* have (both of them) ⁿtheir proper garlands, wherewith to grace the heads of his soldiers. My most courageous and blessed brethren, you have my best wishes for all prosperity to you in the Lord, and my desires, that you would not be forgetful of me. Farewel.

§. 2.
That the resolution of being a martyr shall not fail of a crown.

Revel. 2. 23.

^k *Lapsed children.*] i. e. Those who could not stand the test, but yielded to the force, or the fear, of torments.

^l *Receive.*] i. e. He is so far interested in the success of his servants, that he counts it as his own.

^m *White crown.*] See to the same purpose our author's last words in the tract of *alms and good works*.

ⁿ *Their proper garlands.*] The day of *rest*, approves the soldiers of Christ by all the duties of their christian calling; the day of *battel*, by the peculiar tests of courage and constancy in enduring the several hardships of persecution, or else in resisting unto blood.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XI.

EPISTLE XI.

Written in his
retirement.

The design of this epistle was an exhortation to continual prayer to God; as more especially incumbent on christians in this difficult juncture, to which diverse passages in it do manifestly allude; and the 20th epistle to the clergy of Rome refers to it, where he saith, that his persuasion and address to his whole fraternity had not been wanting to implore the mercies of God. For tho' our present epistle be directed only to his clergy, yet he had ordered it to be communicated to the brethren, and not to be kept up to themselves in private. So that I am induced by these several considerations to place it with our right reverend annalist and editor in the same year, and to believe it written upon the same occasion with the preceding.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



HO I am perfectly persuaded, my dear brethren, that none of you are insensible of your obligation to continue instant in prayer, and that the holy reverence, which you all owe to God, binds this upon you for duty; yet I cannot but think it incumbent upon me to admonish and exhort you, in the midst of your religious dispositions, to cry mightily unto God, and to let your tears and fastings accompany your prayers to the throne of grace. For we ought indeed to believe and to confess, that this dreadful waste, which hath been made, and still is making upon our flock, hath come upon us for our sins, for our forsaking the way of the Lord, and for not walking in those commandments which were designed to lead us to salvation. Christ our Lord fulfilled the will of his Father, but we neglect the will of Christ; instead of it, we hunt after gain, and the improvement of our fortunes; we indulge our selves in haughtiness and envy, and little party quarrels; we are not careful to preserve the simplicity of our most holy faith; our renunciations of the world are merely verbal, and are not attended with a correspondent practice; in fine, we please our selves at the hazard of displeasing all the world besides. We therefore suffer according to our deserts, as it is written; *The servant which knoweth his lord's will, and doth not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes.* What stripes, what buffetings, do not we then deserve, when even our confessors themselves, who should set a good example to others of order and good conduct, keep within no bounds of either? Wherefore whilst some grew insolent and elated upon the merit of their confession, the

John 5. 30.

Luke 12. 47.

^a *Renunciations.*] Our author using the word in the present tense *renunciavit*, induces me to think, that he did not here allude to any solemn form of *renunciation*, such as we know was used at *baptism*, and perhaps at *ordination* too; but rather to that profession which they had embraced, and which implied as clearly, as any words could express it, that they had dedicated themselves to the more immediate service of God and Christ, by acting as ministers in his church.

^b *Confessors.*] Their misbehaviour was too great a dependance upon the merit of their confession, and irregular recommendations of others to the peace of the church, without proper penance; of which we have already had some taste in the *case of the lapsed*, and shall meet with more in the course of these epistles.

EPISTLE

torture overtook them; a torture, which was not so kind as to dispatch them, or to give them any hope of ease or of relief by death; a torture, not intended to dismiss them suddenly to their crown, but to keep them upon the rack, till it could prevail against them, and betray their faith; except perhaps in the case of a very few; who, thro' the peculiar mercy of God, sunk under the pressure, and so went strait to glory, not by bearing the full measure of their punishment, but by expiring before it.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XI.

2. These things we suffer because we have sinned, and thereby deserved them; even as holy scripture long ago forewarned us, saying; *If they forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.* Accordingly we feel at present his rod and his stripes, because we will neither endeavour to please him by our obedience, nor do any thing which hath the least tendency to atone for our disobedience. Let us therefore, with all our hearts and souls, implore the mercies of God, who hath subjoined to the foregoing commination this comfortable promise; *Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from them.* Let us ask, and we shall receive; and, if in regard to the heinousness of our offences, we find our selves not presently answered, let us knock aloud; because *to him that knocketh it shall be opened;* if in knocking at the door of mercy, our prayers be accompanied with sighs and tears, and sent up to heaven, in the spirit of unity, concord, and perseverance.

§. 2.
That this persecution was sent upon them from the just judgment of God.
Psal. 89. 30.
31. 32.

Ibid. 33.
Luke 11. 10.
Ibid.

3. What hath moved me more particularly to write in this manner to you, was an admonition which I received in a vision from heaven, saying unto me, *Ask, and ye shall have.* Next, my people were in the same vision directed to ask for certain persons there described to them; but they could not agree in asking; which exceedingly displeased him who had said, *Ask, and ye shall have;* seeing it is written, *That God maketh men to be of one mind in an house:* And we read in the Acts of the Apostles, *That the multitude of them which believed were of one heart, and acted unanimously:* And our Lord with his own mouth hath told us, saying; *This is my commandment, that ye love one another:* And again; *I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven.* Now if the agreement of two be so prevailing; what would not the agreement of all be able to obtain? If in conformity to the peace which our Lord bequeathed us, the whole fraternity should join in a request? Certainly we should have obtained long ago what we had so asked of God; and our faith and salvation would not have been in the hazard, they are at present exposed to, of a shipwreck.

§. 3.
An admonition given to our author in a vision.
Psal. 68. 6.
Acts 4. 32.
John 15. 12.
Matt. 18. 19.
John 14. 27.

^c Torture overtook.] They had before, perhaps, only confessed the name of Christ upon the question put to them by the magistrate, which indeed exposed them to danger, but not yet to suffering. Afterwards therefore when they grew concerned of that confession, they were in the just judgment of God (saith our author) called to a farther trial, by way of exquisite torture, which did not kill, but continued them in extreme misery without the relief of death, to ease them of their pains.

^d To atone.] Our author's word is *satisfacimus*. In what sense, see note [humiliation] in §. 11. of the case of the lapsed; with notes [to satisfy] and [becoming satisfaction] in §. 10. *ibid.*

^e Unity and perseverance.] In Matt. 18. 19. our Lord hath promised, that if any two of his disciples should agree in asking any thing of his Father, it should be granted; and in Luke 18. 1. he had recommended to them to pray always, and not to faint; and both these our author probably had in his eye, when he exhorted his clergy to unity and perseverance in prayer. Bishop Fell.

^f A vision.] As to the case of miracles, and, among them, of visions, see note [what says me a revelation] in epist. 7.

^g To ask for certain persons.] This (saith Rigaltius) was an allusion to some occurrence then lately passed, concerning the penance of the lapsed, upon which the people could not agree, in asking their absolution. For the people, we shall see, had some agency in that matter, tho' not in absolving, yet in interceding with the bishop for their absolution. And indeed as the offices was given to them, the satisfaction seems, in some part of it, due to them too.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XI.
§. 4.

Another vision
of a net-
fencer and his
antagonist.

4. Nay I may farther add with all assurance, that these evils had never befallen our brethren, if they had been, and continued, *like-minded*; for observe my account of the following vision. There seemed to sit the master of a family, with a youth at his right hand, who sat in a melancholy posture, with his hand upon his breast, and with a certain mixture in his countenance of anxiety and repentment. Another on the left hand of the said master, held a net in his hand, wherewith he seemed to threaten the people, who stood round him, as if he waited for an opportunity of casting it over their heads; and when the person who saw all this wondered at it, it was said to him; that the youth who sat at the right hand was grieved and vexed, that his orders were not better observed; and that he on the left hand rejoiced at the opportunity given him by the master of the family to vent his fury without controul. This vision was vouchsafed long before the present hayock and desolation: and now we see fulfilled what was long before revealed; that whilst we keep not our Lord's commandments, but despise his precepts, the enemy gains a power to hurt us, to cast his net (as it were) over our heads, whilst we are naked and defenceless, and unprepared for such a sudden onset.

§. 5.
That they
ought there-
fore to conti-
nue instant in
prayer.
Hob. 12. 6.

Coloss. 4. 2.

Luke 6. 12.

Luke 22. 31.

1 John 2. 2.

5. Wherefore let us continue instant and fervent in prayer and lamentation; for it is not long, my beloved brethren, since I received a reprimand in a vision, for our sluggishness in prayer, and for our want of zeal in it. Now the God who rebuketh *those whom he loves*, whenever he rebuketh, always doth it for our amendment, that he may save us. Let us then shake off the sloth which at present fetters our devotion, and let us pray instantly with a fervent spirit, and intent upon the duty, as the apostle St. Paul hath exhorted us, saying; *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same*. For the apostles of Christ ceased not to pray day and night; and our Lord himself, who was the great exemplar and pattern of our conduct, prayed and watched often; as we read of him in the gospel, that *he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God*; and we may be sure when he prayed, he prayed for us, as having no sins of his own, but bearing ours. Now that he prayed for us, we read in another passage of the same evangelist, who hath told us, that *the Lord said, to Peter; Behold Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*. If he then watched and prayed, and suffered for us and for our sins; how much rather should we, for our selves, be diligent in the performance of this necessary duty? First of all by praying to him, and next by appealing the wrath of God the Father, through his favourable intercession? For *we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ*, our Lord and God, if we will but repent of our past transgressions; and if, with an humble sense and acknowledgement of those manifold offences whereby we still provoke the wrath of God, we will but resolve to walk in his ways for the future, and to keep his commandments. [These are the conditions whereupon we have Christ our *advocate with the Father*.]

§. 6.
That God cha-
stises, and at
the same time
protects his
faithful ser-
vants.

6. The Father chastises, and at the same time protects us; yet not unless we will continue steadfast in our most holy faith, and abide by Christ, notwith-

Net-fencer.] This was a sort of gladiator, who fought publicly before the people, with a net in his hand, which he laboured to cast over the head of his antagonist, and so to drag him down, and entangle him, that he might have him at mercy. The reader will easily perceive, that the *net-fencer* here is designed to mean the devil; the youth, our Saviour; the master of the family, God the Father; and the people, the net-fencer's antagonists. N. B. Our author doth not directly say he had himself this vision, probably thro' his modesty, that he would not boast of the *abundance of his revelations*; but tho' he speaks in the third person (as indeed in the preceding vision he doth not speak directly in the first) yet we cannot doubt, but that he was himself the person, who had the favour of this and the other vision.

Sift.] Our author's word is *vexaret*, viz. Toss and tumble up and down.

[These are the conditions, &c.] These words enclosed within the hooks [] are added by me, as helps to my reader's memory, and to remind him of the conditions which our author judged necessary to interest us in Christ's mediation.

standing the persecutions and pressures which may attend us in so doing; as it is written; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* None of these can separate real believers, or force those from him who truly adhere to his body and blood. Persecution to such is indeed nothing more than a test and trial of their sincerity; God would prove and examine us thereby, even as he always deals with his faithful servants; and yet in such examinations, his assistance is never wanting to true believers.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XI.
Rom. 8. 35.

7. Finally, to the least of all his servants, who hath many sins to account for, and in all respects is unworthy of so great a condescension, he, in his infinite mercy hath been pleased to give the following direction, saying; "Bid him be secure and easy, for that settled times are coming; and as to the intervening delay of them, there is reason enough for it, since there are some yet remaining to be proved in this trial." Nay even as to the point of spare diet in eating and drinking, we have moreover some intimation from above; and that, with a manifest view of preventing any declensions in the vigour of heavenly virtue, through the allurements of the world; and of disengaging the mind from the weight and incumbrance of fulness and satiety, that so it might the more easily and expeditely watch unto prayer. These are things which I have judged it unfit to keep to my self, or to conceal from you; since they have, all, a tendency to your improvement and information. Nor ought you therefore to conceal this epistle, or to keep it to your selves, but should communicate it freely to all our brethren. For indeed to intercept those instructions wherewith our Lord condescends to enlighten his servants, is the part of those only, who would not have their brethren assisted with any necessary helps. Let them, then, by all means, be taught, that their present trial is intended to prove them; and therefore let them never be moved by any present tribulation to revolt from the faith, which they have once professed.

§. 7.
That God had vouchsafed a vision to our author to acquaint him the church was to have peace.

8. Let every one acknowledge and confess his sins, and if he hath not yet done it, let him put off, concerning his past conversation, the old man; inasmuch as "no man looking back, and putting his hand to the plough, is fit for the kingdom of God." And the wife of Lot, who looked back against express order, we may remember, lost all the fruit of having gone so far. Wherefore let us not look at the things behind us, to which the devil would fain attach us; but to the things before us, whereunto Christ our Lord invites us. Let us lift up our eyes to heaven, that this earth may not seduce us by its deceitful enticements. Let every one of us pray to God, "not for himself alone, but for all his brethren; even as our Lord hath taught us to pray, who hath recommended to each of us, not a private prayer for our own persons only, but hath directed us to pray for all our brethren, in one common supplication, and with one and the same spirit. If then our master shall observe us to be peaceable and humble, united to each other with the bonds of charity, fearful of his displeasure, and reformed by the correction which the present distress hath given us; he will at length deliver us from the persecutions of

§. 8.
That the best course would be a serious and speedy repentance.
Ephes 4. 22.
Luke 9. 62.
Gen. 19. 26.
Philip. 3. 13.

[*Bid him.*] Rigaltius here takes notice, that the person bidding, was that master of the family before mentioned; and the person bid, was the youth there referred to; and the person whom the one bid the other speak to, was our author. N. B. The prediction here referred to of settled times, was published in unsettled ones; and yet, when there was small human appearance of their mending, the expedition of the Decij, which happened soon after, made some abatements in the fury of the persecution; and their unexpected death put a final end to it. So that the event verified the prediction, and proved our author no enthusiast, nor impostor in his pretence to the revelation.

[*No man looking back and putting, &c.*] In this order some Greek MSS. still read the verbe here cited.

[*Not for himself alone.*] This our author had before insisted on in §. 4. of the Lord's prayer.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XI.

our enemy; and as we have been under his ° discipline, we shall have his pardon. Let us therefore pray to God without ceasing, and ask with a full assurance of receiving, in all humble and mournful strains, as becomes those who stand in such an unhappy posture, between the ruins of those who are fallen, and the remnant of such as are yet in danger; between a numberless company of unfortunate compliers, and a few courageous refusers. Let us beseech Almighty God, that peace may soon be restored to his church, that such of us as have retired may again appear, and be rescued from the danger which at present threatens us; that there may be a speedy accomplishment of those things which our Lord hath vouchsafed to reveal to us, even the restoration of his church, the security of her members, fair weather to succeed the present tempest, light after darkness, and a clear sky after an overcast and cloudy one. These are the succours we expect from the loving kindness of our heavenly Father towards us; the usual effects of his power, and the glories of his grace; thro' which we trust, that the blasphemies of our persecutors will finally be rebuked and silenced; ° the penance of such as have lapsed be perfected, and they who have stood it out with firmness and courage, may find at last a season to rejoice and triumph in their glorious conduct. My dear brethren, I bid you most heartily and affectionately farewell.

° Discipline, we shall have his pardon.] This was the course of church discipline, to bring the offender to a sense of his sin, and then to pardon, or absolve him. And to this our author might probably allude, as designing to insinuate, that the church in this procedure had God for her example; not to admit to pardon those offenders, who had not first bent to discipline.

° Compliers and refusers.] Were those who stood to their principles in the time of danger, and those who flinched from them.

° The penance of such as have lapsed be perfected.] It was all along a grievance to our author, that the lapsed were in such haste for a re-admission to the church, before they had satisfied for the scandal they had given her, by a legitimate and proper penance. Wherefore here he intimates his hopes, that it might be perfected, (reformatio in his word) as being hitherto very imperfect.



Epistle XII.

EPISTLE XII.

Written in his retirement.

Pamelius, from the mention of frequent admonitions to his clergy in the beginning of this epistle, concludes it to have been written towards the end of our author's retirement, and therefore, with him, it is N^o. 37. But our right reverend annalist hath made another sort of inference from the passage in it, which speaks of numbers dying in prison, that therefore it must have been written in the heat of the persecution; which upon the proconsul's leaving Carthage (much about this time) grew milder; and so he hath made it one of the thirteen epistles, whereof we have mention in ep. 20. The argument of Pamelius from frequent admonitions given to his clergy, may, I think, be answered, by his having written so many in so short a time, as we have hitherto gone thro'; which are enough to justify the propriety of his saying he had written frequently; at least in a matter so conjectural, it will not be worth while to change the order of the edition, which we have thus far followed.

CYPRIAN

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XII.



HO' I well remember, my dear brethren, that I have, in diverse letters, exhorted and reminded you, to take all possible care of those who have gallantly confessed Christ in the time of danger; yet I cannot but repeat to you, in the most pressing terms, my former persuasives, that they who are so full of honour, may be in no want of any fit accommodations. I heartily wish the^a place, or my post, would suffer me to be upon the spot with you; where, I am sure, I should with all alacrity minister in person to the necessities of the saints, and perform for them all courteous and friendly offices; but these, I trust, will be supplied to them in my absence, thro' your diligence; and that you will do every thing on their behalf, whom God hath blessed with such extraordinary degrees of faith and constancy.^b As to the bodies of those, who depart this life in prison, tho' they have never been put to the torture there, yet I think their bare imprisonment in so good a cause entitles them to all imaginable honour, and to all the care and solicitude you can bestow upon them. For there is indeed no manner of reason, why they should not be thought entitled to the martyr's honour. As much as in them lay, they endured every thing, by being ready to endure. He, who hath offered himself to the torture, and to death, in the sight of God, hath suffered all which the will of God designed him to suffer. He did not flinch from the torture, but rather the torture from him: As it is written; *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.* Now the persons I am writing of, have so confessed him: And again saith our Lord, *He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.* Now they have so endured; their untainted virtues and courage have carried them even unto the end. Once more it is written; *Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Now they have continued firm, faithful, and invincible, even unto death. Wherefore when they have thus finished their course in bonds and imprisonment for the cause of Christ, and confessed his name, and given all possible proofs of their readiness to endure every thing for his sake; I see not what is wanting in their case, to complete and finish the martyr's glory.

§. 1.

Matt. 10. 32.

Ibid. 5. 22.

Revel. 2. 10.

2. Accordingly, I think you should^c observe the days whereupon they depart this life, that they may be commemorated with honour, as those of

§. 2.

That the days of their departure were to be observed as the martyrs were.

^a Place, or my post.] The place was Carthage; at that time the proconsul's residence, which made the persecution rage the hotter there. Our author's post was the episcopal chair; which so distinguished his person, that the people were enraged with him to a degree, which would not suffer him to be there, without danger to himself, and a just apprehension of increasing the danger of his flock, by increasing the fury of their enemies against them.

^b As to the bodies.] This relates to the care of burying them; whereof we have before taken notice in note [lie unburied] in §. 3. ep. 8.

^c Observe the days, &c.] To what hath been observed in note [no remembrance of him at the holy eucharist] in §. 2. ep. 1. I would here add, that the custom of the church in her diptychs, had probably its rise from the custom of cities in making persons free, whose names were upon that occasion inserted in the publick register, and preserved in the archives of the city. Thus when any were made free of the christian corporation, by being admitted into the church of Christ, their names were also inserted in her register, which was a two-leaved record, one page of which contained the names of her living, the other of her deceased members. Now as in the civil government, the right of sacrifices, and of partaking in them, was a principal branch of the privileges appendant to a denison, and the priests were directed to take care, that no profane person, nor stranger, should be admitted to them; so the christian community did herein symbolize with the civil usage. The names of her faithful members, were solemnly offered at the altar, in the highest act of her worship; and whilst they were but few, particularly recited; tho' in process of time, as the recital of all grew too burdensome, the oblation of them in general, served instead thereof; and the recital thence was confined to distinguished persons, and to the particular season, (as it yearly returned) whereupon they departed this life. The christian community superadded therefore to the custom which she derived from civil usage, the recital of the names of her departed members; as she believed the communion of the saints above with those below, and in

A. D. 250.
Epistle XII.

the martyrs are; altho' indeed my care herein may seem superfluous, forasmuch as *Tertullus*, our most laborious and faithful brother, among his manifold other good offices and cares, which he so freely undertakes for all our brethren, and particularly with regard to the bodies of the persons so deceased, hath written, and continues writing to me, a regular account of all those persons who pass so gloriously from prison, and from death, to life, liberty, and immortality; and we^d offer up here the usual sacrifices and oblations in commemoration of them, which I trust, through the blessing and protection of our Lord, I shall^e soon be enabled to offer with you. And as I have often written to you, so here again I take the freedom to remind you, of providing for the poor with all diligence; those of them, I mean, who have stuck to their principles, and engaged courageously in the same holy warfare with us, without deserting it in the time of danger; upon whom indeed we ought, in this juncture, to bestow a more especial measure of our good offices; since neither the pressures of poverty, nor those of persecution together, have made the least impression on them, to the disadvantage of their zeal and fidelity in their service of Christ; but maugre all discouragements, they have set a gallant example of constancy and perseverance to others in the like condition. My dear brethren, I cannot enough express my affection for you, nor my grief for my necessary absence at this time. You have my best wishes for your welfare, and my desires of a remembrance from you. Salute all our brethren in my name. Farewel.

token thereof, she joined them thus together. To this custom the *book of life* is a plain allusion; as if there were a book in heaven to correspond with this on earth: Since it was firmly believed, that whoever was here entitled to the communion of saints, would be entitled to the same hereafter. So that the *book of life* hath rather (as Mr. Dodwel hath remarked in a dissertation upon this subject) a reference to ecclesiastical unity, than to any secret decree of God. As to striking the names of any out of these *diptychs*, see what was before observed in note on §. 2. ep. 1.

^a Offer up, &c. in commemoration.] The *memoria martyrum*, or the annual commemorations of martyrs are as old, as the eldest apostolical persons. We can trace them up to the age of St. Polycarp, and have a noble testimony thereunto, as well as against the abuse of them, in a letter from his church of Smyrna preserved by Eusebius, b. 4. ch. 15. and published by our most learned Bp. Usher; which hath expressly recorded the day of his martyrdom, and told us: "That they observed it yearly, with the reason of their so doing; not for any advantage which they believed he could receive by it; but to train up others for following his example. And though they were careful to preserve what they could of his sacred reliques, and esteemed them more than they did the most costly jewels; yet they reserved their worship for the Son of God, and esteemed the martyrs only for being his disciples and followers, and for the superlative love expressed by them, to their Lord and King." They preserved therefore every circumstance of their sufferings with all fidelity and care; but our present martyrologies are very different, and full of all trumpery and superstition. Bp. Fell.

^c Soon be enabled.] This he said in dependence on the vision, which had informed him, that the church would soon have a respite from her present troubles.



EPISTLE XIII.

Epistle XIII.

Our author wrote three epistles to the confessors, in his retirement; the 6th, Written in his retirement. which was written before they had been put to the torture; the 10th, whilst they were under that severe trial; and this 13th, after diverse of them had suffered by imprisonment, torture, banishment, &c. wherein he blames those of them (as the 20th epistle takes notice he had done) who had been banished, and returned before their time; thereby exposing themselves unnecessarily to the edge of the laws.

CYPRIAN to Rogatianus the presbyter, and to the other confessors his brethren, sendeth greeting.

THough I have heretofore sent you my congratulatory letters, most dear and valiant brethren, wherein I have applauded your constancy and courage, in terms expressive of the utmost satisfaction; yet I cannot but again repeat to you the pleasure I take in remembering and in mentioning you with honour, upon all occasions. S. t. That confessors ought to take a more special care than others of their conduct. For what can be imagined a fitter subject of joy to me, or more agreeable to my most ardent wishes, than to observe the flock of Christ adorned and edified with the honour of your glorious confession? Since this is a case wherein our whole fraternity is interested; and in the common joy, the bishop's share should be ever greatest: For the honour of the church, is properly the honour of her pastor; such share as we, therefore, take to our selves, in mourning over the case of those, to whom this injurious season hath proved fatal; the same we take in rejoicing over those, whom the attempts of the devil could not prevail to conquer. Yet I beseech you bear with me, whilst I still conjure you by our common faith, and by that affectionate and true concern which I have ever had for you, that you would proceed in the glorious track whereupon you are entered; and, as in the first encounter, you have proved too hard for your adversary, that he may always find you in the same readiness to receive and oppose him. For we should consider, that we still live in a world of various temptations; our struggle, as yet, is so far from being over, that every day exposes and endangers us; wherefore your care should chiefly be, ^d to carry on your auspicious beginnings to a prosperous conclusion; and as you have set out so happily, to end accordingly. When you have made such a progress, and gained a point so considerable; your next endeavour should be, to keep what you have; otherwise your preceding advances will

^a Common joy, the bishop's share greatest. As the bishop's share was greatest in the distribution made of the christian oblation; so here our author doth probably enough allude to it, and say, that it should be greatest too in any thing, which concerned the honour or interest of his paroque or diocese.

^b Injurious season proved fatal. *Viz.* The season of persecution; and the case of those who were overcome by it, and gave up their religion to the terrors of it.

^c Every day exposes, &c. *De vita nostra quotidie dimicamus.* Rigalrus would have this allusive to spiritual dangers, which indeed it might be; yet it did not. (I suppose with our right reverend editor) exclude, but imply, the temporal danger of persecution, which every day exposed the christians, whilst it continued raging: And as Tertullian had before observed in *Apol.* ch. 40. *If any thing happened amiss, presently the christians were called for to the lions.*

^d To carry on. He exhorts the confessors to finish their glorious confession by martyrdom; if called to it.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIII.

John 5. 14

Isai. 66. 2.

Rom. 2. 24.

Matt. 5. 16.

Phil. 2. 15.

1 Pet. 2. 11.

12.

§ 2.

That any person who was banished by order of the higher powers, and came home without leave, and was taken up for it, suffered thencefor-

wards as a criminal, not as a christian.

Rom. 11. 20,

21.

serve you to little purpose. For thus it is in the case of baptism; which doth not save a man by getting, but by keeping it. If he doth not finish his course, whilst it is yet entire to him, the mere obtaining it will be of no use to him. Our Lord himself hath taught us thus much, where he saith; *Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* Imagine now this spoken to one of you confessors; "Behold thou art become a confessor; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." We have moreover farther instances to our purpose from *Saul* and *Solomon*, and diverse others, who retained the grace which was given them, so long as they continued walking in the ways of the Lord; but when they struck out of rule, that grace forsook them. We should therefore be careful to order our goings in the strait and narrow path which leads to glory; and as a meek and orderly behaviour is very suitable to the character of every christian, (according to that declaration of our Lord, that he would look to none but such as were *meek and humble, and trembled at his words*.) so it is more especially agreeable to you confessors, who should shine as exemplary lights to the rest of our brethren, and provoke them to follow each step you take. For as the *Jews, thro' whom the name of God is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles*, are thence become aliens from him; so on the other hand, they become his friends, thro' whose good and orderly conduct his name hath praise and honour ascribed to it; as our Lord himself hath more than intimated, where he exhorts us, saying; *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*: Which is followed by that advice of the apostle *St. Paul* to us; *Shine ye as lights in the world*: And again by that of *St. Peter*; *As strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whilst they sit in judgment upon you, as evil minded persons, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify the Lord.* It is with much satisfaction that I observe the far greater part of you careful to behave your selves after the manner here recommended; improved by the honour of your confession, and diligent in your endeavours to maintain the credit of it, by a course of regular and exemplary conduct: Yet some, after all, I hear of, who prove blemishes to the rest of you, and fully the lustre of your glorious character by their bad conversation. These, I think, in tenderness to your own reputation, you should reprove, and check; and endeavour to reform.

2. How great a blemish, for instance, is it upon the credit of your order, when some of you stay at home, and spend your time in luxury and extravagance, whilst others without leave returning to their countrey, from whence they were banished, are taken up for it, and suffer thenceforwards not as christians, but as criminals. A third sort I hear is puffed up, and waxes proud; notwithstanding that we find it written; *Be not high minded, but*

doth not save a man by getting, but keeping.] A man was judged to lose the benefit of his baptism, by committing a sin which exposed him to a judicial censure. He was then esteemed not to keep his baptism.

1 Yet entire.] Viz. Whilst the benefits of baptism are not forfeited by any heinous sin.

2 When they struck out of rule.] Here our author doth very probably glance upon the irregular procedure of those confessors, who were too importunate and peremptory in their demands of peace for those lapsed brethren, to whom they gave tickets of recommendation. They struck out of rule (dominica disciplina, as our author here calls it) in so proceeding.

3 Shine ye.] As the Greek phrase would indifferently bear an indicative or imperative construction, our author took the liberty of applying it to his purpose in the latter way (shine ye) and not as we render it, ye do shine.

4 Sit in judgment.] Our author's word (which is *parastant*) properly signifies diligent, and repeated enquiry into any thing; though, according to that indifference wherein the African writers frequently used all prepositions, it is not impossible, that he might mean by it, what the vulgar version and the glosses did, and understand with them the apostles *παροιστον*, as we interpret it, viz. *detrectants*, or speak against.

5 Evil minded.] Malignis. Ill disposed persons easily become *κακοιστοι*. which is the apostle's word, and by us literally translated evil doers.

6 As criminals.] Viz. for not submitting to legal punishment, however undeserved.

fear; for if God spared not the natural branches; take heed, lest he also spare not thee. And again, our Lord was led as a sheep to the slaughter; as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And once more; I am not rebellious, neither do I gainsay; I gave my back to the rods, and my cheeks to the palms of their hands; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. And can any one after this, who professeth to live in and by him, take upon him to boast, or to be high minded, forgetting both his example, and his precepts, which he either delivered to us by himself, or by his apostles? If the servant be not greater than his Lord; they who pretend to follow their Lord, should be meek, and peaceable, and quiet, as he was; and the more any man doth abase himself, the more he shall be exalted; inasmuch as our Lord himself hath said; *He that is least among you, the same shall be great.*

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIII.
Isai. 53. 7.

Isai. 5. 5, 6.

John 13. 16.

Luke 9. 48.

3. But what a terrible case is that which I also hear of, with infinite concern and grief! and how deserving is it of your severest censures! It seems there are some amongst you, who are not ashamed to defile those members, which have been honoured with the torture for the sake of Christ, nor to profane those temples of God, which have been consecrated afresh by the confession of his name, (to defile them, I say) by a promiscuous mixture of their beds with womens; and howsoever they may plead, that their consciences in this matter are free from the sin of uncleanness; yet surely it is no small crime to have set an example, the scandal of which hath proved ruinous to others.

§. 3.
The horror of
an impure
confessor!
what a monster
he was!

4. There ought also to be no envy nor contention amongst you; seeing that our Lord hath bequeathed his peace to us; and it is moreover written; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* And, *If ye bite, and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another.* Abstain, I beseech you, likewise from all railing and reviling; since revilers shall not inherit the kingdom of God: And besides; the tongue, which once hath confessed Christ, should preserve the dignity it hath thence obtained, and never afterwards make it self vile by unseemly language. He who, according to the commands of Christ, speaks what appertains to peace, and righteousness, and truth, doth in effect confess Christ daily. We renounced the world at our baptism; and we verify that renunciation when we are tried and approved by God; forsaking all we have, and following our Lord, and living thenceforwards in his faith and fear. Wherefore let us animate one another, by mutual encouragements and persuasives; and let us endeavour to make all possible improvements in our holy religion; that so when our Lord shall mercifully vouchsafe that peace to his church, which he hath promised her; we may return to her new men, with an entire change of all faulty dispositions; and both the Gentiles and our brethren may observe us in every thing reformed and amended; and that they who before admired the height of our courage, may henceforwards be as much surprized with the regularity and order

§. 4.
That the soldiers of Christ
should abstain
from all envy
and contention.
John 14. 17.
Levit. 19. 18.
Matt. 22. 39.
Galas. 5. 15.
1 Cor. 6. 10.

Luke 5. 11.

of

[Isai. 5. 5, 6.] In our author's way of reading, or of rendering this passage, it was apparently and literally fulfilled in Christ; as the reader may easily be convinced, by comparing it with *Matt. 16. 67.* or with *Mark 14. 65.*

[To defile those members, &c.] This refers to the practice complained of in epistle 4.

[Confess Christ daily.] *Viz.* by doing what he hath commanded. The more signal confession, these confessors had once submitted to; but by thus behaving, our author tells them, they would in effect confess him daily. All these glances are pointed to the turbulent and assuming behaviour of some in their number, of which we have already taken notice in this epistle; note [struck out of rule;] and have heard more in the case of the lapsed; and shall again meet with it in the succeeding epistles.

[Renounced the world at our baptism.] We have so often in the course of this work remarked upon the baptismal renunciations, that it will not be needful to take any farther notice of them.

[Vouchsafe that peace which he hath promised.] Our author for this depended, we may observe, with great assurance upon his visions.

[Return to her.] The press hath here mangled our author's text in our editor; but *Pamellini* and *Rigaltius* have supplied what is wanting.

[Order of our future behaviour.] After these words, *Rigaltius* saith, he had met with a MS. of *Rheims*, which added a good deal more, of our author's care concerning those in prison, how, "tho' he had

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIII.

of our future behaviour. My dear brethren, I heartily wish you now and always to, farewell.

"written to his clergy more than once upon that subject, yet that he had sent them now a considerable sum out of his own private stock, which he carried off with him to his retirement, for the supply of his necessary occasions in it. And that Victor likewise, his deacon, who there accompanied him, had done the same. As also; that he rejoiced to hear, of other brethren being so liberal and forward in their contributions." This addition (saith Rigaltius) is the more considerable, as it shews our author's labour of love to have grown upon him: We had mention before of his allotting to this purpose his share from the oblations of the faithful at Carthage; but here he sends to Carthage what he had reserved for his own necessary expences in his retirement. Our right reverend editor observes however upon this addition of Rigaltius, that it was utterly unsupported by any printed or MS. copies, which it had been his hap to light upon.



Epistle XIV.

EPISTLE XIV.

Written in his retirement.

This was written by our author to his clergy, upon the common occasions of his church, and to excuse his own absence from them in such an unhappy juncture; and besides, to restrain the misbehaviour of certain confessors, as well as to give proper directions in the case of the lapsed; who from this time forwards (viz. about the month of June, A.D. 250.) grew troublesome; all which will appear more particularly in the body of the epistle.

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

S. t.
That both the lapsed and the confessors were so admonished of their duty by the clergy.



Desired, my dear brethren, for my own part, nothing more earnestly, than that my letters to my clergy might have found them all both safe and untainted; but since the present calamity which hath made such dreadful havock among my people, hath added this to the load of my other sorrows, that it hath also torn away a part of my clergy from me; I daily beseech our Lord, that you, who stand hitherto fast, I hear, to your faith and principles, may be preserved henceforwards, through his mercy, blameless and out of danger. And though there are divers causes moving me to come amongst you with all expedition; such as my own ardent longings to see you, and the opportunity which I thence should have of consulting in common with you, and thence of determining with more advantage, upon the several occasions of our church, and its common interests; yet, upon the whole, I have judged it more eligible to lie still and secreted for a season, in regard to other considerations, which concern the general good, and with which our dear brother Tertullus will more at large acquaint you; who amidst his other cares and endeavours for the publick service, per-

^a Both safe and untainted.] Safe with regard to their persons; and (integrum) untainted with respect to their principles, and courage in abiding by them. But the following words shew, that his letters found them so in neither capacity; for the persecution had taken off some of them, and terrified others from adhering to their religion.

^b Several occasions.] Amidst these, the case of the lapsed, was that which required the speediest determination.

suaded

suaded me into my^c present measures of caution and reserve, and advised me not to be seen, nor to trust my self in that place, where I had so often, by name, been called for, and sought out. Wherefore, relying on your fidelity and affection, I do by these presents, beseech and exhort you, who can appear upon the spot, with less invidiousness and danger, that you would supply my absence, and perform in my stead, whatsoever offices are necessary to the care of our flock.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIV.

2. The first thing therefore, which I would recommend to you, should be the care of our poor, in such proportions and measures as you are able to provide for them; those of them, I mean, who have stood firm to their professions, and not forsaken the flock of Christ; that their necessities may severally be supplied through your industry, and that they may be enabled to support themselves under their respective wants; lest distress and destitution should be more prejudicial to their principles, than the most imminent article of danger yet hath proved to them. Your care should likewise be employed in a more especial manner, upon our illustrious confessors; and though I am very sensible that divers of these are well provided for, by the^d officious labours of our brethren; yet if there should be any left of them who stand in need of necessities, let them, by all means, be furnished; as I have^e formerly written to you, when they^f were under confinement; only let them know, and learn, and be instructed by you, what the laws of discipline and order, as deduced from holy scripture, do require from them, *viz.* to be peaceable, and modest, and to keep within rule; that they may maintain and preserve their character without blemish, and be as renowned for the regularity of their after-behaviour, as they have been for the honour of their former confession; and by approving themselves in all things to our Lord, may be found meet at last for the glory of the martyr's crown; for the greatest trial of all is yet behind, and we find it accordingly written; *Praise no man before his death.* *Eccles. 11. 28.* And again; *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* *Revel. 2. 10.* And our Lord hath also pronounced in the case before us; *He that endureth unto the end shall be saved.* *Matt. 10. 22.*

§. 2.
Imprimis, To take care of the poor.

3. Let them be persuaded to follow the example set them by Christ our Lord; who, upon the approaches of his passion, did not exalt, but more than ever humbled himself; For in that critical juncture he washed his disciples feet, saying; *If I, your Lord and master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* Let them, moreover, observe the pattern which the apostle, St. Paul, hath laid before them; who after having been often imprisoned, scourged, and exposed to the wild beasts; continued, notwithstanding, in the same meek and lowly frame of mind. Nay even after his admission to *paradise*, and being *caught up to the third heaven*, he assumed nothing to himself from such distinguished privileges; we only read him saying; *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but*

§. 3.
That our Lord was more humble than ever at the time of his passion.
John 13. 14, 15.

2 Cor. 6. 5.
1 Cor. 15. 32.
2 Cor. 12. 2, 4.
2 Thess. 3. 8.

^c *Present measures.*] As our author was, upon all occasions, very intent upon the point of excusing his retirement; so we have here a sketch of his reasons for it, which, however, were to be communicated more at large by Tertullus, a presbyter, in great confidence with him.

^d *Officious labours.*] *Fratrum voto et dilectione susceptos.* This Bp. Fell thinks might refer to an order of men in the primitive church, who dedicated themselves to this office of visiting the sick and imprisoned in their extremities, and employed their whole time in the service of the poor. These were called *Parabolani*, men who valued no danger in performing these offices.

^e *Formerly written.*] *Viz.* in epist. 5.

^f *Were under confinement.*] Their being now at liberty, proves therefore, that the rage of the persecution was somewhat now abated.

^g *Praise no man.*] *Mē mūnāzē.* Felicitate, congratulate no man; or judge no man blessed, as we translate it. The vulgar version is here the same with our author's, *ne laudes.* The whole argument of our author tends to caution these confessors, against irregular practices which they were too prone to; and to put them in mind, that they had not yet resisted unto blood, and knew not, as yet, how they should bear that trial.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIV.

Matt. 23. 12.

§. 4.
Our author
postpones the
case which
had been re-
commended to
him till his
return.

wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you. These things I beseech you to inculcate, upon our brethren, with frequency and care; and since he that humbleth himself hath the promise to be exalted; the season more particularly requires them to stand upon their guard against their adversary, who is always most intent upon gaining an advantage over those of distinguished bravery; and the more so, because he hath been already foiled by them; and therefore he would retrieve his disgrace, by vanquishing the victor. I pray the Lord to grant that I may soon have an opportunity of seeing them, and of endeavouring to settle them in a resolution to preserve the honour they have acquired, without blemish or diminution. For it grieves me to the very soul, when I hear that diverse of them walk disorderly, behave themselves with insolence and pride, run into little party-quarrels, foment or sow divisions among their brethren, defile the members of Christ, (which they have made yet more illustrious by the confession of his name) thro' unlawful cohabitations with the other sex; and upon the whole will not submit to be governed by the deacons and presbyters of the church; but instead of it, by means of a few corrupt examples, the whole body of our confessors suffer much in their credit and character; whose judgment and testimony the men I complain of ought to dread, lest it should disown, and condemn, and exclude them finally from their fellowship and society. For indeed he only is entitled to the just honours of a confessor, whom the church of Christ finds afterwards more reason to boast, than to be ashamed of.

4. I have determined with my self to return no final answer, by my own single authority, to the case upon which *Donatus, Fortunatus, Novatus, and Gordius*, my brethren presbyters, have written to me; as having always resolved from my first entrance upon the episcopal chair, to transact no matters of moment, upon the foot of my own authority only, without taking along with it your advice, and the approbation of my people; and therefore, when it shall please God to permit me to come amongst you, we will consider and consult together upon such affairs, as shall then lie before us, with all those regards to each other, which our respective stations require us to receive and pay. My dear brethren, I long to see you; mean while I beseech you to believe that I heartily wish you all prosperity, and that your remembrance

^h *Walk disorderly.*] *Improbis & insolenter discurrere, viz.* Run up and down amongst the lapsed, and assumed to themselves a power of dispensing with the discipline of the church, and of demanding, in peremptory terms, the restoration of offenders before their penance. They presumed upon the honour of their character, which prevailed, it seems, with some inconsiderate presbyters, to restore the lapsed without penance.

ⁱ *Unlawful cohabitations.*] This refers to the case mentioned and discussed in epistle 4.

^k *To be governed by the deacons. &c.*] Observe here, that all the laity, even those of the most glorious figure and character in the church, were however subject to the regulations of the clergy in matters of religion, and of the discipline appertaining to it; tho' upon the coming in of the *heretics* to the church, a great share in the management of discipline was given up by the governours of the latter to those of the former.

^l *Without taking your advice, and the consent of my people.*] Tho' all church authority, was properly and originally vested in the bishop; yet in the affair of communion, wherein all were interested, as being obliged to avoid the person censured, and as being moreover personally aggrieved by the scandal of his sin; some regard was had to their sentiments, as they were more or less favourable to the offending party. Our author besides had particular reasons for communicating this matter to his brethren, and for not taking the whole weight of it singly upon himself. He was ordained a bishop somewhat out of course. He now fled from the persecution, which he had much ado to excuse to those who stayed behind. The martyrs and confessors who solicited the speedy restoration of the lapsed, were at that time very popular; and directly, or singly, to have opposed their pretensions, might have been of ill consequence. So that upon the concurrence of all these reasons, what our author at first resolved in regard to his promotion out of course, he determined to abide by in this particular instance upon farther reasons; which yet were prudential and discretionary, rather than from the nature of the thing in general, necessary or indispensable. For as to the bishops sole original power, when he had a mind to exercise it in matters of discipline, and even in this very particular, the reader may be pleased to see what is written in ch. 2. part 2. §. 2. of the *penitential discipline*; where, I think, I have proved the bishop's sole right, when he had a mind to insist on it. See note [*concurrence of your sentiments*] in ep. 17.

of me, will be of all things the most agreeable to my desires. Recommend me to our brethren who are with you in the kindest terms; and let me hear from you, how I stand in their esteem and affection. Farewel.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIV.



EPISTLE XV.

Epistle XV.

Upon the letter which he had received from his four presbyters, mentioned in S. 4. of the preceding epistle, which, tho' not extant, concerned, we have no cause to doubt, the case of the lapsed, who were very forward and eager to be restored without penance, and for that purpose obtained tickets from the martyrs and confessors, intimating in terms too peremptory, their desires and expectations, that they (the lapsed) might be forthwith restored to the privilege of communion: Upon this (I say) our author, after having declared in the preceding epistle, that he would not finally determine this matter, till he could debate and consult upon it with his clergy and people, wrote the three following epistles, to compose things for the interim. The first (which is our present) to the confessors; the second to his clergy; (N^o. 16.) and the third to his people, (N^o. 17.) and sent them all three together.

Written in his retirement.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the martyrs and confessors, sendeth greeting.



THE charge which is entrusted with me in my station, and the powers of conscience oblige me, most courageous and blessed martyrs, to remind you of your duty, who have so religiously and bravely stuck to the faith of Christ, that ye be not found tardy in observing his law, and the rules of his holy discipline. For as it behoves each soldier of Christ, to pay due regard to the orders of their great commander; it is more especially expected from, and incumbent upon, you to do so; whose conduct is considered as exemplary to others, and is set forth as a pattern of virtue, and of the fear of God. I thought indeed that the presbyters and deacons, who are upon the spot with you, had fully instructed you in this matter, what was the rule of the gospel, as they had ever done in the time of my predecessors; under whom it was always usual for the deacons to resort to the prisons, and there to suggest to the martyrs the proper limitations, which were fit to be set to their desires and intercessions, in cases of this nature; and so to moderate them by their advices, and by the word of God. But now I hear with the utmost concern, that the rules of the gospel are so far from being represented to you, that they are even of set purpose and design withheld from you; insomuch that when you have proceeded with due caution in this affair, with a just regard to the honour of God, and a becoming deference towards his bishop; certain presbyters take upon them, to put by your good purposes, and to make them of no effect; And whereas you have sent your letters to me, desiring that your intercessions may be considered, and that certain lapsed persons, who were named in them, may have the peace of the church, as soon as the persecution shall be over, and an opportunity thence afforded us of meeting our clergy, and

S. 1.
That it is especially incumbent upon confessors to set a good example to others; and therefore that they should keep to rule in their intercessions for the lapsed.

[Cases of this nature.] Viz. the intercessions of the martyrs for the restoration of the lapsed.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XV.

of forming our selves again into a regular body; *they*, without any fear of God, or any consideration of their bishop, setting aside the rule of the gospel, and^b forgetting the modesty and deference, wherewith you expressed your desires in this matter, presume to^c make oblations for the lapsed, and to admit them to the holy eucharist; that is indeed, to profane the body of our Lord; notwithstanding that they know it to be written, *Whoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*; and as a farther aggravation of their faulty conduct, they have thus admitted these offenders to communion, ^d before any submission made by them to penitential discipline, before any confession of their heinous and crying sin, and before any imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy, in order to their penance. I blame not so much the lapsed for their part in this procedure; no wonder if they who are dead in trespasses and sins, are in haste to be quickened again unto a lively hope; no wonder if men in extreme danger are very solicitous to get into a place of refuge and security! But it is the proper business of those who are over them in the Lord, to keep them to rule and order, to correct their eager haste, and to instruct their ignorance; or else, instead of approving themselves the true shepherds of the sheep, they will become as bad to them as *butchers* and murderers. For a mischievous condescension is, in effect, a cheat; nor are those who have *fallen, raised* by such helps; but, by a practice offensive to God, are rather *cast down*, and pushed upon destruction. These rash and over-hasty presbyters, may even learn from your discreet and modest comportment, what they should have taught others: They should have waited for the judgment of their bishop, as to the subject of your request; and should not have been so precipitate in giving the peace of the church, for which you interceded, till the return of peaceable and settled times. The mother should first have had peace, and then our consultation upon the peace of her children might have been fit and decent: But as I am informed, my dear and courageous brethren, that some are pressing upon you beyond all the bounds of modesty, and will take no denial from you; I beseech you, with all possible earnestness, to set before your eyes the examples of your predecessors, and to consider how far other martyrs, who have gone before, have made compliances, and how careful they were in making them; that you may be so too, and may duly weigh the rea-

^b *Forgetting the modesty, &c.* The intercessions of living martyrs, i. e. of such confessors as had suffered, tho' not unto death, (see note [*martyrs and confessors*] in epist. 10.) were considered only as petitions from them to the bishop on the behalf of offenders, which he might grant or reject at pleasure; but the tickets given by martyrs just before their decease, had more consideration after their deaths. If the lapsed had given scandal to the church, they had procured her as much honour.

^c *Make oblations for the lapsed.* i. e. To offer their oblations, which the priest did to God; and without these none approached the holy communion; so that to make oblations for them, or in their name, implied their admission to the holy eucharist. See note [*celebrate the holy eucharist*] in epist. 5. The names of the living communicants were also offered upon the altar, by the bishop; together with those of the dead who had deceased in communion in the church; so that either way, to offer them, or to offer for them, implied their being in communion with the church. See note [*observe the days*] in epist. 12. §. 1.

^d *Before any submission, &c.* This passage hath delineated to us the several stages and processes of the penitential discipline; and our author in effect hath told us what should have been done, where he specifies and finds fault with the omission. They should have performed legitimate and proper penance, and gone through all the stages of it, (for which, see notes [*higher penance*], and, [*highest degree of penitential rigour*] in §. 2. of epistle 4.) but they were so far from having done this, that they had not so much as made any solemn acknowledgement of their fault, which was necessary, in point of form, to receiving imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy; nor had they received that imposition of hands, which was also necessary to have admitted them as penitents; so that they skipped over every thing, and were received to communion, without any submissions. The first thing should have been a solemn confession of their sin; upon that should have followed imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy, in order to their penance; thence they would have commenced proper penitents; in this state they should have continued, for the time assigned them; (so far our author here proceeds) what would then have remained, would have been another solemn confession. (See note [*solemn confession*] in §. 13. of the case of the lapsed) and then would have followed their full restoration by another imposition of hands. Nothing of this was here done, which was the reason of our author's censure upon the hasty practice. See note [*imposition of hands*] in suffr. 8. coun. Carth.

sonableness

sonableness and justice of the petitions which you hand to me: Inasmuch as you are, in a particular manner, the friends of God, and as such to sit hereafter with him in judgment; you are the more obliged to look into the behaviour, life, and conversation of each particular person, whom you would recommend to favour; and to examine the kind and quality of their several offences; lest by your making improper promises, and leading us thence into unfit performances, our church should have ^e cause to be ashamed before the *Gentiles*. We receive, indeed, here very frequent visitations and rebukes from the hand of God, and are admonished by him to keep his commandments pure and inviolate; and I doubt not but you have the same; and thence are fully instructed in matters appertaining to the discipline of the church.

2. This point will easily be adjusted, if you will truly make it a matter of conscience how you comply with the requests of these importunate petitioners; endeavouring to find out, and give a check, to such as would ^f make a market of your privilege, or deal out your favours with a partial respect of persons; and upon this I have written both to my clergy and people, and ordered ^g both letters to be read to you. I would, moreover, beseech you to specify the names of such in particular as you would desire should be restored to the peace of the church; for I am informed that some of your tickets run thus; *Let such an one, with his friends, be admitted to communion*: Which is an unprecedented method, never, as far as I can learn, used heretofore by martyrs; and indeed it is evident, that such a dark and loose recommendation, may easily bring an odium upon us: For really it is a very extensive undetermined way of speaking, to say, *such an one with his friends*; and twenty, or thirty, or more, may come under that pretence and cover, and may suggest themselves to be the dependents or domesticks of the person who hath got the ticket. Wherefore I again intreat you, that you would particularly signify to me the names of such as you would desire should be restored; that you would see the persons, and acquaint your selves with their circumstances, and be assured that their humiliation comes very near the just measures of a ^h legitimate and full satisfaction; and upon the whole, so manage your recommendatory letters, that they may be consistent with the rules of discipline, and with the laws of the gospel. My dear and valiant brethren, I heartily wish your health in the Lord, and beg your remembrances of me. Farewel.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XV.

§. 2.
That it is of great importance to the restoration of church discipline, that the names of the lapsed should be specified in the recommendation of these martyrs.

^e *Cause to be ashamed.*] The honour of the church was considered as one main reason of the penitential discipline; that it might have no spot nor wrinkle, as the apostle speaks, *Ephes. 5. 27*. It was thought, that if those were not separated from the church who would not live within the rules of it, the house of God would become as a den of thieves; as the constitutions have intimated, b. 2. c. 17. *Make a market of your privilege.*] The corrupt practice of setting indulgences to sale, had thus early, it seems, a foundation.

^g *Both letters.*] These are the two following letters, sent at the same time, and upon the same occasion with this.

^h *Legitimate and full satisfaction.*] i. e. They whose humble behaviour brought them nearest to the case of those who had gone through the several forms and stages of penance. As to the word *satisfaction*, it was chiefly meant with regard to the church, and to the removal of that scandal which their sin had given to its members. See notes [*becoming satisfaction, and to satisfy*] in §. 10. and note [*humiliation*] in §. 11. of the case of the lapsed.



A. D. 250.
Epistle XVI.



EPISTLE XVI.

Written in his
retirement.

This being written and sent at the same time, and upon the same occasion, with the foregoing one, will need no other, nor farther introduction.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.
That the
presbyters, by
courting fa-
vour with the
lapsad, do
them much
mischief.

I

Have * born a great while, my dear brethren, without stirring in-
to this unhappy business, in hopes that by not meddling with it,
I might keep it quiet: But since I find there are those amongst
you, who will not let it sleep, but by their turbulent and rash
presumption, press upon the modesty of the confessors, diminish
the honour of the martyrs, and disturb the peace of our whole fraternity; I
think my self obliged to break silence, and to interpose in this matter; lest
the people committed to my care, should suffer in the conclusion thro' my
neglects. For what have we not to fear from the displeasure of our Lord;
when ^b some of our presbyters forgetting the rules of the gospel, as well as the
rank they hold in the church of Christ; and making no account of their
bishops authority, nor of that day which shall bring every work into judg-
ment; enter upon unwarrantable, unprecedented measures; and, in defiance
of their superior, and with an exclusion of his power, claim to themselves the
sole management of the church? And I could heartily wish that the mischief
went no farther, than to the personal affront which herein they offer to their
bishop, and that his flock were unconcerned in the untoward consequences
of their foul attempt. I could easily enough put up the former, having been
used to do so; but in the latter case, I cannot, and ought not, to stifle my
resentments; when some of you mislead and delude my people, and injure those
of them who have had the misfortune to fall away in the hour of temptation,
by mean and popular arts of courting their favour, and of restoring them to
communion, without any cause for it, or any conditions exacted from them.
They who thro' the violence of the persecution have been induced to com-
mit this grievous sin, are very sensible, themselves, that it is of the ^d deepest
dye; inasmuch as our Lord and Judge hath (they know) pronounced; *Who*

^a *born a great while.* He had written several letters, as we have seen, upon other business, in his
retirement; but, with the *rest of the lapsad*, he had not as yet professedly meddled, till he received
these disagreeable letters upon that subject (mentioned in §. 4. of the 14th epistle), and he hoped to
have obviated the mischief, by resuming any determination upon it, till his own return, in settled
times; but finding it a spreading evil, he wrote to his clergy what here we find upon it. Bishop Fell.

^b *Some of our presbyters.* Viz. those who were named in the 14th epistle; some of them afterwards,
distinguished by the name of the *five presbyters*, who continued their factious opposition to their bishop
from that time.

^c *Rank they hold.* Viz. inferior to their bishop; "without whom (if they would have hearkened to
that apostolical father and martyr St. Ignatius) they ought to have done nothing in matters of an ec-
clesiastical nature; neither to have baptized, nor to have celebrated the holy eucharist; and in doing
any thing clandestinely without his knowledge and participation, they would have been thought to
serve the devil." And Tertullian, our author's great master, might have acquainted them, "that it
was inconsistent with the peace and honour of the church, to do any thing in it, or so much as to
baptize without his authority." Ignat. *Ad Smym.* §. 8, and 9. Tertull. *de Baptism.* c. 17. And
our author soon after very justly calls this presumption of his presbyters unprecedented.

^d *Deepest dye.* The sins particularly committed against God, were antiently so accounted. And none
among these was greater, than idolatry, as implying apostacy; which the reader will here find judged
to be the sin against the Holy Ghost. See note on §. 28. of the 3^d book of Testimonies [that the church
cannot pardon, &c.]

soever will confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven: But whosoever shall deny me, &c. him will I also deny, &c. And again; All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemy; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath no forgiveness, but is guilty of a sin which shall never be forgiven him. The blessed apostle hath also thus spoken; Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. He who conceals these declarations from our brethren, puts a cheat upon them to their infinite disadvantage: For whereas by submitting to a regular course of penance, and by a diligent attendance upon prayers and good works, they might have appeased the wrath of God, who as a Father hath bowels of compassion for all his children; they are by these means misled to their greater damnation; and when they might have risen again, they are hence made to fall the lower and the heavier: And whereas in crimes of less consequence than this, offenders are regularly put upon a course of penance for a certain time assigned to them; and in the common forms of the penitential discipline, are brought to a publick confession of their sin; and thence, upon receiving imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy, are restored at length to the privilege of communion; now, tho' the time of their penance is not fulfilled; tho' the persecution yet is raging, and consequently the peace of the church is not yet settled; they are rashly and hastily admitted to communion, and their names are solemnly offered to God upon his altar; nay, tho' they have not performed their penance, tho' they have made no humble confession of their sin, tho' they have received no imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy; the holy eucharist is administered to them, in the very face, and, it should seem, in defiance of that scripture, which saith; *Whosoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.* A. D. 250.
Epistle XVI.
Matt. 10. 32,
33.
Mark 3. 28,
29.
1 Cor. 10. 21.
1 Cor. 11. 27.

2. They indeed, who are not so well versed in the rules of scripture, have less to account for, and less guilt upon their consciences; but they who are set over them, and are negligent in giving them proper instructions and admonitions, how to do every thing in the fear of God, and in conformity to his laws, (*these*) are the persons who are most obnoxious and blame-worthy. They expose the blessed martyrs to envy and ill-will; and engage the glorious confessors of Christ in misunderstandings with a bishop of his church; infomuch that when *they*, out of a due deference to my station, had sent me letters, signifying only their desires to have their request considered, and the peace of the church restored to her offending members, when our mother the church should, *her self*, have peace restored to her thro' the mercies of God, and when, thro' the protection of his providence, I should be permitted to return to my chair in safety; these presumptuous presbyters, regardless of the deference paid to me by the blessed martyrs and confessors, and of those gospel rules, which the same martyrs and confessors desired might be kept to with all exactness; have adventured to communicate with the lapsed, and to offer up their names upon the altar, and to give them the holy eucharist; not-
§. 2.
That the people who thus hasten to communion, are in less fault than the presbyters, who encourage them.

* *A sin which never shall be forgiven.*] *Reus est aeterni peccati*, saith our author; and diverse Greek copies still read it, *ἀναγνίσκω*, or *ἀναγνίσκω*; which Grotius thought was the best and truest reading; the vulgar Latin follows it, and reads, *aeterni delicti*.

† *Fall the lower.*] As they fell away from the faith of Christ by their apostacy; so they are by these means (saith Rigaltius) persuaded away from his discipline too. Which is, *plus cadere*. Bishop Fell.

‡ *Crimes of less consequence.*] *Viz.* less than that of apostacy; tho' otherwise bad enough; such as adultery, murder, &c.

§ *Regularly put upon a course of penance.*] For the several forms and steps of this discipline, which here the reader will observe delineated, he may be pleased to look back upon note [*before any submission*] in the preceding epistle.

|| *Their names are offered.*] See note [*make oblations for the lapsed*] in the preceding epistle, with what is farther there referred to.

¶ *Martyrs to envy.*] Either by granting or refusing a request of so nice and ticklish a nature.

A. D. 250,
Epistle XVI.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XVI.

Withstanding that the danger of the persecution is not yet over, that I am not yet returned to my charge; and that the ¹ martyrs themselves are living whose recommendation is pleaded for this irregular practice: Although indeed, if the martyrs, in the height of their noble ardour, should ask any thing out of course, as not having time to weigh minutely either the fitness of the thing in question, or the determinations of holy scripture concerning it; they ought to be reminded of their error, by the presbyters and deacons attending them, as in like cases hath been always done: Wherefore the providence of God ceaseth not day and night to rebuke and chastise us; and besides the visions of the night, the holy Ghost enters into ^m children after a miraculous manner; who see, and hear, and speak in their extasies, what our Lord would have observed and practised in his church. I shall recount it all to you, as soon as God, who directed and commanded me to retire, shall be pleased to open a way for my return. In the mean time, let the rash and presumptuous amongst you, who *fear not God, neither regard man*, assure themselves, that if they persist in their factious and irregular practices, I will use the power which God hath directed me to use, and will ⁿ restrain them from ministering in the holy communion, till it shall please God to re-assemble our scattered brethren, and to form them again into an united body; and then these men shall plead their cause before me, and before the confessors themselves, and our whole fraternity. I have written upon this occasion to the martyrs and confessors, and to all our people; both which letters I have ordered to be read to you. My dear, and much-wanted brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, and beg your remembrance of me. Farewel.

Luke 18. 2.

Luke 18, 2:

¹ *Martyrs themselves are Trium.*] It hath already been observed, that the request of those martyrs who had not yet refitted unto blood, were of less account and consideration, than theirs were, who proved their perseverance to the end, and did the church thereby as much honour, as the laps'd had laden her with disgrace. See note [*forgetting the modesty*] in the preceding epistle.

¹ *Children, &c. in their extasies.*] As to the case of *visions*; See note on epistle 7. [*vouchsafe me a revelation, &c.*] It seems another way of extraordinary revelations was by the *mouth of babes*, in extasy declaring the will of God, upon particular and great emergencies.

n *Refrain them from minifring[ing].* [*Prohibeanus* offers.] This was what we call suspending them; and this the reader will observe was done by the sole authority of the bishop, without any assessor with him in this sentence. And he asserts expressly this authority to bishops, in his 3^d epistle; where he tells *Regasians*, that he might have used his own authority against his contumacious deacons, and exorted against him the full strength and vigour of his episcopal jurisdiction.

[In Both which letters.] These are the preceding, and following epistles.



EPISTLE

A. D. 250.
Epistle XVII.



EPISTLE XVII.

Was written upon the same occasion with the two foregoing ones.

*Written in his
retirement.*

CYPRIAN to his lay-brethren, * who stand fast in their holy profession, sendeth greeting.



Know from my self, and from the motions of my own heart, dear brethren, that you lament and deplore the downfall of our brethren; wherein I sympathize with you, and each misfortune of this kind touches me to the quick; I feel, methinks, the truth of those words which came from the blessed apostle; *Who is weak, and*

§. 1.

I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? And again; Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member rejoice, all the members rejoice with it.

2 Cor. 11. 29.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

I do heartily, therefore, condole with you, upon the fall of our lapsed brethren, who have yielded to the force of persecution, and carried off a part of my bowels with them, thereby making me a fellow-sufferer with them in their great calamity: To which, though the mercies of God may apply an effectual remedy; yet I cannot but be of opinion, that we ought to do nothing in this matter rashly or hastily; lest by a presumptuous and unwarrantable resort to the privilege of communion, the displeasure of Almighty God should be the more provoked against us. The blessed martyrs have written to me upon the case of some particular persons, desiring that their intercession for them might be farther considered. It shall accordingly be considered, when our Lord shall have given peace to his church, and therewith an opportunity for my return to my charge; then every thing shall be fully discussed before you, and I will take the concurrence of your sentiments with me. Yet I am informed, that some of our presbyters forgetting the rules of the gospel, and not considering the tenour of those letters

* *Who stand fast.*] See this noted in the inscription of the first epistle.

† *The mercies of God may apply.*] The *Montanists*, and the *Novatians*: after them, though they thought the church could not pardon the three great capital crimes of idolatry, murder and adultery, yet agreed, that the mercies of God might be extended to them, upon a sincere repentance: So our author here very prudently suggests to his lapsed brethren, that if any of them should happen to die before the peace of the church was given them, their condition was not, therefore, desperate; for that the mercies of God might still be open to them. Hence he foreclosed the most popular objection, which could be made to his treatment of them, in denying them peace immediately. Bp. Fell.

‡ *The concurrence of your sentiments.*] *Judicantibus vobis* (you judging) are our author's words; who in epist. 14. §. 4. had said, that he determined from his first entrance upon his episcopal chair, to transact no matters of moment, upon the foot of his own single authority, without taking the advice of his clergy, and the consent of his people. The reasons of which the reader may see noted there, and particularly with regard to the case of communion, in which all were interested, to whom the scandal was given: But yet all were not strictly judges of it, however the bishop might think fit to take their opinions in it. Our author in his letter to *Cornelius* mentions his restoration of some even against the will of his people. Epist. No 59. §. 11. Bp. Fell compares the part of the people in this matter to that of our juries, who find the fact, and leave the point of law, and of authoritative determination to the judge: And our author in his epistle to pope *Stephanus*, No 68. §. 1. claims the whole authority of discipline, and of censure to the episcopal chair. St. *Ignarius* makes the bishop all in all; and the *constitutions* (especially in b. 2. c. 10; 11, and 18.) direct him to take care of every thing, and blame him when discipline is slackened.

§ *The tenour of those letters.*] Which were more submissive, and only desired that regard might be had to their intercession, when their bishop should return, and peace be restored to the church; whereas these presbyters had no regard to any such limitations, but absolved the lapsed by their own authority immediately;

A. D. 250.
Epistle XVII.

ters which the martyrs wrote to me upon this occasion, and throwing off all regard to the honour and authority of my episcopal chair, have already communicated with the lapsed, and admitted their oblations, and given them the holy eucharist; whereas they should have risen (you know) to this privilege^c by proper steps. For if, in^e offences of a less heinous dye, which are not directly committed against our Lord, there be a confessed necessity of submitting to publick penance for a certain season, and of acknowledging the sin in a very solemn manner, and of inspecting the life and conversation of the person under discipline; and if no one can be received, even in these lower cases, to communion, without imposition of hands from the bishop and his clergy; how much more necessary is all this, in the case of these more enormous and grievous sins; and with how much greater reserve and caution, and more exact observance of rule and discipline ought we to proceed in them? My presbyters and deacons ought indeed to have given you proper directions in this matter; nor could they otherwise discharge the trust reposed in them, of cherishing the flock committed to their care, and of teaching them the proper methods, whereby they might obtain pardon and salvation. I am so well acquainted with the dispositions of my people, and know them to have so just a sense of their duty to God, and of their obligation to regularity and order; that I am perfectly persuaded they would, of their own accord, have fallen into the proper methods of appeasing God's displeasure against them, if some of my presbyters had not misled them, by plausible and popular condescensions. Wherefore, my brethren, I must recommend it to you, to interpose in this affair, and to restrain the forwardness of the lapsed by your advice and persuasion, within the limits^f prescribed to them by the gospel. No one should gather an apple, before the advance of the season hath duly ripened it; no one should put out to sea with a leaky vessel, which hath been damaged by ill weather, before he hath refitted it; no one should be in haste to wear a torn garment, till the proper tradesmen have had it in their hands and mended it. The case of these our brethren is not unlike the instances which have been mentioned. They should have patience to hearken to the advice I give them, and to wait for my return; and then, when it shall please God to give me the opportunity of coming amongst you; I will call a council of my colleagues, who, together with me, may examine the contents of the blessed martyrs letters, with what they desire in them, before the confessors themselves; which will be perfectly agreeable to rule and order. Upon this I have written to the clergy, and to the martyrs and confessors; and have ordered both those letters to be read to you. My dear, and much-wanted brethren, I heartily wish your welfare in the Lord, and beseech you to preserve a remembrance of me. Farewel.

mediately; which they should not have done without the penance of the parties, and leave of the bishop. N. B. This is the first instance of absolution without penance; and this we see was factious and irregular, and censured as such. It was even a doubt, whether the offenders in such an heinous sin, might be absolved *after* penance; but *before* and *without* it, it was utterly unjustifiable.

^c By proper steps.] What these were, the reader may see noted in epistle 15. §. 1. note [*before any submission, &c.*] and the words which next follow in this epistle repeat to us the main of them.

^e Offences of a less heinous dye.] See notes [*deepest dye*] and [*crimes of less consequence*] in the preceding epistle.

^f Prescribed to them by the gospel.] Tho' the gospel had laid down no particular rules which were strictly applicable to this case; yet it contained general directions, against communicating unworthily, against giving offence and scandal, against walking disorderly, and disobeying such as had rule and authority in the church; and to these general orders, special cases were easily reducible.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XVIII.

Our author, upon farther consideration of the case of the lapsed, and of the distempers which the heats of the summer season were apt to produce, thought fit to temper the rigour of his three former letters, and to allow a provisional communion in the case of such, as were in danger of death. They were to be admitted to a clinical penance, in their extremity, and so to communion: And accordingly towards the latter end of June he wrote the directions contained in this epistle.

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

I Cannot but express my wonder to you, my dear brethren, that you have not returned me one word of answer to the several letters, which I have at different times sent to you; when you cannot but know, how much it would conduce to the advantage of our brethren, and to a supply of their several wants, if I were duly acquainted with the state of their affairs, and thence enabled to suggest the fittest methods for the management of them. However, since I find, that it will not yet be proper for me to come amongst you, and that the ^a summer season is now begun with you, which is usually attended with various and fatal distempers; I have farther considered the case of our brethren; and am now of opinion, that they should have some relief in it: Those of them, therefore, who have got commendatory letters from the martyrs, and by virtue of ^b their peculiar privilege may be the sooner reconciled to God, are henceforth dispensed with in case of sickness, or other extreme danger of life, and need not wait for my return; but may make their humble confession of their sin, before any presbyter whom they can procure to attend them; or if a presbyter cannot be got, and death approaches, they may ^c do it before a deacon; and so may receive imposition of hands as in a state of penance, that they may depart hence in the peace of the church, which the martyrs have

^a Summer season.] This was one considerable motive with our author for relaxing the rigour of his former sentence. But that it was not his only one, is evident from the 20th epistle, where the opinion of the Roman, as well as of his own clergy, for greater lenity to the lapsed, appears to have had also a farther weight with him. Bishop Fell.

^b Their peculiar privilege.] The martyrs were thought to have a special interest with God, in the case before our author, which he here acknowledges; and calls it their *prærogativa*; a term of the Roman law, which implied a privilege, or concession, or, sometimes, pardon from an higher court, pleadable in a lower; and was originally derived from the right of certain magistrates, to ask the opinion, or consent of the senate, in any case, first and before others.

^c Do it before a deacon.] This solemn confession upon a sick bed, tho' more private, than that which was in the face of the congregation, was not however what now is called *auricular*; but was made before the representative body of the church; which, as Tertullian hath observed, may consist in two or three of her members, (*de penitent.* c. 10.) There were lay-men there, as well as clergy; the deacon was here to represent the clergy, if a presbyter could not be got; but this was only in case of necessity, and by express commission from the bishop. So that the confession and penance of the sick, as far as was possible, was to be publick. There was then no notion of the clancular and private practice, now obtaining amongst those of the Roman persuasion; and it is hoped the reader will observe, that a restoration to the peace of the church, was the *absolution* which these times talked of.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XVIII.

desired for them by their letters written to me on that behalf. ^d The rest of my people, who have had the misfortune to fall away in the time of persecution, I must recommend to your care; that you, who are upon the spot with them, would endeavour to support them by proper encouragements and exhortations; to fortify them against a despair of God's mercies, and an entire revolt from the gospel; by suggesting to them, that their case is far from being an abandoned one, and that the mercies of God will in due time be extended to them also, if they proceed in a course of regular and orderly behaviour, are duly humbled for their sin, and manifest the sincerity of such humiliation, by submitting to discipline, and by persevering in good works. They likewise who as yet are in a state of *hearers* only, and candidates for baptism, should not be neglected, if the near approaches of death should prevent their farther process; nor should the mercies of God in that case be withheld from them, if they earnestly desire the grace of God. My dear brethren, you have always my wishes for your welfare, and my desires of a remembrance from you. Let all our brethren know how much I am theirs, and how desirous that they would not forget me, which I must beseech you to obtain of them. Farewel.

^d *The rest of my people.*] The next case to theirs, who had obtained recommendatory letters from the martyrs, was the common case of the lapsed; and the privilege granted upon those letters, appears to have been no more, than admitting them upon their sick-beds to clinical penance (which if they survived, they were obliged to perform) and thence, provisionally, to communion. The rest were to take the chance of waiting for settled times, and the return of their bishop; and to be encouraged by the clergy, with the hope of being admitted to the mercies of God, though they were not to the peace of the church, in case of dying before absolution; according to what was observed in note [*mercies of God may apply*] in the preceding epistle.

^e *In a state of hearers only.*] The prayers of the ancient church being all eucharistical, excepting only that for catechumens first, and next that for penitents, which just preceded the rest, the catechumens, or candidates for baptism, were only *hearers*, as being always dismissed from the congregation before the celebration of those solemn mysteries; viz. as soon as ever the lessons of scripture, and the exhortation, or sermon, which followed thereupon, and the prayer for themselves, were severally over. They continued for some time in this rank of *hearers*; and if any of them committed a sin in that time, which would have been condemned to penance in a person baptized; they were set backwards in the time which was allotted for their continuance under the degree of catechumens, and were to go over it again. They were then to be such *hearers* as mere heathens were, without so much as being admitted to join in the prayer for catechumens; of whom, as of penitents, there were more degrees than one. See council of Nice can. 14. Neocaesarea can. 5. Eliberis can. 42.



A. D. 250.
Epistle XIX.

EPISTLE XIX.

Upon the answer of his clergy to him, which is not now extant, and their excuse for their past neglects, and their acquainting our author, that some of the lapsed were still urgent for a restoration to communion; and therefore desiring his farther directions how to deal with these importunate people; He sends this reply, wherein he abides by his past determination, and orders them, in no tittle, to recede from it. This passed in the month of July, the same year. Written in his retirement.

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

I Have received and perused, my dear brethren, your letter, wherein you tell me, that you have not been wanting in any fit or proper admonitions to our people, to wait with patience our Lord's time, and not hasten, before it, to the privilege of communion; for that thus, when we shall have an opportunity of re-uniting our selves into onebody, we may consult together upon every point of ecclesiastical discipline which shall come before us; and this more especially from a view of what we find written, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent.* Now he is properly to be called a penitent, who, agreeably to the commands of God, behaves himself regularly and meekly, with due deference to his ecclesiastical superiors, and endeavours in this way, as well as by other laudable and virtuous actions, to recommend himself to the favour of God. But since you have intimated to me, that some are very importunate and pressing for a speedy restoration to communion, and therefore you desire directions from me how to proceed in that affair; I refer you, for answer, to my former letters, whereby I suppose you to be fully instructed in it; viz. That they, who have received commendatory letters from the martyrs, and in virtue thereof may probably have the earlier access to the pardon, and mercies of God, should be permitted to depart hence to him, with that peace of the church, and that assurance of forgiveness which the martyrs have undertook to secure for them. In case of danger and extremity, they should make, I mean, their humble confession of their sin, and receive imposition of hands, as in a state of more regular and solemn penance: But for the rest, who have received no such letters of recommendation from the martyrs, and yet would load us with the odium of insisting upon the most rigorous and harsh conditions; since their number is not inconsiderable, nor the case indeed, limited to this or that church, or province, but belongs in common to every church of Christ throughout the world; they must be content to wait till the church of Christ is, her self, restored to a state of peace, through the protection and blessing of her Lord and governour. For this is most, indeed, agreeable to the rules of mode-

* *Directions from me.* Formam a me vobis dari, i. e. A precise rule of proceeding; orders what to do, which were to be exactly followed; such as the limited written orders of a superior to an inferior officer; for the word (*forma*) here is technical; and this (as Mr. Dodwel hath observed of it in his dissertation upon the place) is the just importance of the phrase.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XIX.

sty, discipline and our former character; that the bishop's assembling together with their clergy, in the presence of those lay-brethren, who have stood fast to their principles in time of danger, and to whom, upon that account, great respect and deference are due, should settle every thing after the solemnity of a common consultation. But now how contrary is the practice of certain lapsed brethren, to all the rules of religion, and how destructive, even to themselves, who are in such haste to be re-admitted, when they would step before those illustrious confessors, who have been banished from their countrey and habitation, plundered of their estate, and not yet returned to the church? and yet, I say, these men, who have thus offended, are for pressing forwards, and for getting into the church before them! If they are in earnest so impatient for a return to the church, which they have thus shamefully forsaken; the way is open to them; and the season such, as will give them a fair opportunity of obtaining all they ask for. The battel is not yet over, and there are still encounters enough remaining, to approve the courage of any who yet would list in the service; if they are truly sorry for, and ashamed of, their past cowardice, and would atone for it, by the ardor and gallantry of some after-practice, they who cannot wait for a regular restoration to the peace of the church; may then anticipate it, by the martyrs crown. My dear brethren, I beseech you to preserve a remembrance of me; and to believe me ever yours. Recommend me to all our brethren; and secure me some place in their thoughts. Farewel.

In the presence of those lay brethren. We see what the part of the laity was in this matter, that they might be present, to object; or bear testimony, for, or against, the restoration of any person to communion, whose life and character they might easily be supposed to be best acquainted with. And even this part seems to have been vouchsafed them in honour to their stedfastness and courage. *The season such.* Viz. a time of persecution, which would give them opportunities enough to signalize their courage, and to become martyrs, which was judged a supply of other defects, and esteemed as safe and efficacious to those who suffered it, as baptism, or absolution. N. B. Our author is not here to be understood, as recommending in general that forward ardor, wherewith some offered themselves to the fury of their persecutors; he knew he spoke safe enough to these lapsed brethren; and besides, they who had so shamefully sneaked from the faith of Christ, owed it a reparation, by a voluntary confession of it, if they were truly sorry for their past denial. See note *(the day is approaching)* in epist. 57: §. 1.



EPISTLE

A. D. 250.
Epistle XX.

EPISTLE XX.

Our author having written thirteen letters to Carthage in his retirement, wherein he provided, as well as he could, for the exigencies of his church; and diverse false reports being industriously spread abroad concerning him; some, by the lapsed, who disliked his rigour towards them; others, by his old enemies, who opposed his advancement to the episcopal chair; and all taking advantage to reproach him for secreting himself, and quitting his flock; he now thought it proper to write this letter to the Roman clergy in the vacancy of their see; and with it to send copies of his other thirteen, which he had written in the space of a few months, to his clergy, confessors and people, whereby he hoped to remove the ill surmizes and suspicions, which these reports might have raised in his brethren of Rome, or elsewhere, concerning him. This he did in our present epistle, written in the month of July, A. D. 250.

Written in his retirement; and during the vacancy of the see of Rome.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons of Rome, who stand fast in our most holy faith, sendeth greeting.

HAVING found, my dear brethren, both my past and present conduct partially and untruly represented to you, I have thought it incumbent on me to write this letter to you, and therein to clear up the account of my diligence in my ministry, and in my dispensation of that discipline which is entrusted with me. Upon the first disturbances which arose amongst us, and which were immediately attended with a cry of the populace for my blood; I retired for the present, according to the directions of our Lord to us, under such circumstances; and this I did, not so much from a regard to my own safety; as from my concern and care, for the tranquillity and quiet of my brethren and people; and indeed fearing, that my obstinate stay with them, might exasperate that tumultuous spirit, which had already thrown us into such confusion. Yet tho' I was *absent in body*, I was not so *in spirit*; nor have I neglected any fit opportunities of interpoling with my advice and authority, nor of providing for the exigencies of my people, as far as my slender abilities would

Cor. 5: 3.

To clear up the account. They who would hence infer any subordination of the Carthaginian to the Roman see, must certainly be little acquainted with the usages of the antient church, and with the nature of that brotherly correspondence, which was held between one church and another. Our author desired (we may be sure) to stand well with other churches, and especially with that of Rome, eminent in those ages for the purity of her doctrine, and the sanctity of her bishops, as well as for the grandeur of her see. And therefore he gives her clergy here an account of his whole conduct; which yet was such, as any one bishop might give to the bishop or clergy of any other see, without any undue inferences of authority claimed or acknowledged, by one, over the other.

Directions of our Lord. Who in Matt. 10. 23. had directed his disciples, when they should be persecuted in one city to fly into another. To which he added his own example in Luke 4. 30. Upon which Origen, in John 8. 12. observes, That our Lord hath taught us in the case of persecutions, or of other attempts against us, to retire from the danger. And Clemens Alexandr. giving an account (in Strom. b. 4.) of our Lord's directing his disciples to fly, saith it was to prevent their being accessory to any sin in themselves or others. For on one hand, if he who kills a servant of God commits a sin in so doing; so this he is accessory, who thro' rashness and excess of courage, throws himself in the way of such treatment. He doth, as it were, direct his own murder, who takes no care to avoid it; but instead of it exposes himself to danger. And thus the church of Smyrna calls the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, who had first retired to avoid his persecutors, a martyrdom according to the gospel, and an imitation of Christ's. So far was our author from being singular in his practice. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 250.
Ephile. XX.

carry me. What I have done in these several particulars, my letters will speak for me, which I sent upon divers occasions to them, in number 13, whereof I have transmitted to you the copies; in which you will find, that I have not been wanting, either in advice to my clergy, or in encouragements to the confessors, or in reproofs, when necessary, to such ^c as were banished, or in proper persuasions and exhortations to all my people, that they would fervently implore the mercies of God; you will hence, I say, observe, that I have exerted the utmost of my poor endeavours for these several purposes, agreeably to the rules of the Gospel, the reverence which we owe to God, and ^d the suggestions which I received from time to time, upon these occasions from him. When my people were brought to the torture, or imprisoned in order to it, I found means of reaching them with proper persuasives, to encourage and confirm them. When I perceived, that such as had either polluted their hands and mouths with the abominable sacrifices of the heathens, or had tainted, however, their consciences with impious ^e certificates; (when I perceived, I say) that these men run about to the martyrs, and by their importunity with them, and with the confessors, extorted some improper interposals from them, inasmuch, that without examination or distinction of cases, ^f thousands of tickets were daily given by the said martyrs and confessors, against all rule and order; I immediately dispatched away my letters to those martyrs and confessors, and endeavoured, as far as I was able, to recall them to an observation of the methods and practices approved by the gospel. The presbyters and the deacons of my church, have likewise had ^g some taste of my episcopal authority; so that when some of them had so far trespassed upon the rules of discipline, as to communicate with the lapsed rashly and unseasonably; they were restrained and checked for it by the interposals of my authority. I laboured also to settle the minds of my people, and to instruct them in the proper measures of ecclesiastical discipline.

^c As were banished.] He had reproved these men for returning home before their time was expired, and exposing themselves thereby to suffer, not as christians, but as evil doers. See epist. 13. §. 2. Our author here is recounting the subject of his 13 epistles.

^d The suggestions, &c.] Here he alludes to those special revelations, which upon extraordinary occasions were vouchsafed him.

^e Certificates.] Purchased of the magistrate, affirming that they had sacrificed. The 14th §. of the case of the lapsed expressly reprobates this practice; which is further noted there in note I. *owned himself the doer.*

^f Thousands of tickets daily given.] The reader by this time is, I presume, acquainted with the importance of these tickets, or letters recommendatory, given by the martyrs to the lapsed, in order to obtain their speedier restoration to the peace of the church; But it will be of more consequence here to observe the numbers of people, who, by this way of calculating, must be supposed to have constituted our bishop's paroque or diocese. If thousands of tickets were given in a day, and divers of those tickets included numbers; (as in epist. 13. §. 2. *Let such as are sold to his friends, be admitted to communion*) what must we conceive of the total of people committed to our bishop's care? There was still a good remnant of his flock untainted, divers confessors and martyrs; and besides all these, every day produced its thousands of such as fell away in the persecution, and obtained tickets for their speedier access to pardon. And yet of those who fell, we may presume a good many did not obtain these tickets. What will the patrons of congregational episcopacy say to this? Will they affirm it at any time possible, for such numbers as must be included in this account, to meet in the same place of worship? Or if at other times this were possible; is it credible, that such numbers should be permitted by the civil magistrate, to assemble for a purpose, not countenanced, but always suspected, when not actually persecuted by him? If the case were thus at Carthage, what do we think it must have been at Rome; where the number of christians must be conceived yet greater? Could a single congregation hold all the christians of that bishop's diocese? This could never be, even in the first 300 years; and afterwards 'tis agreed, that no such thing was either practised, or practicable; so that if there were but one bishop in a city, as we are sure there were no more than one; that one must of necessity have subdivided his flock, and assigned them to different congregations, under different pastors, or presbyters, inferior, and accountable to himself.

^g Some taste of my episcopal authority.] Presbyters & diaconis non desunt sacerdotis vigor. Our author is here giving an account of his own conduct and care; and amongst other things, that he had exerted his episcopal authority (called by him sacerdotis vigor) over his presbyters and deacons upon certain occasions; which *regulation*, by a strange blunder, mistakes, and would have to signify the part which presbyters and deacons bore in the priesthood; which construction, if the words would bear it, would be entirely foreign from our author's scope and purpose. Bp. Felt.

2. Afterwards, when some of the lapsed, either at their own motion, or else at the instigation of some other person, grew so impetuous in their demands, as to aim at extorting, by violence, that reconciliation, which the martyrs and confessors had undertook for in their favour; I wrote twice upon this subject to my clergy, and ordered my letters to be read in *their* hearing; and to allay, if I could, by any means, their heat and violence; for the present, I resorted to the following expedient, *viz.* That if any who had received these tickets from the martyrs, were in imminent danger of death, they should make their solemn confession, and receive imposition of hands, in order to their penance, and so should be forwarded to heaven with that peace of the church which the martyrs had promised to obtain for them. Nor did I set up, in this procedure, my own arbitrary will and pleasure for a rule, or precedent; but was moved to it by divers reasons: For some regard and deference seemed due on one hand to the intercession of martyrs; and on the other hand, the influence of those who laboured to throw every thing into confusion, was to have a check upon it; and in my pursuance of this measure, I was yet farther confirmed upon reading your letters which you sent by *Clementius* the sub-deacon, signifying your opinion, that such of our lapsed brethren, as should make in their sickness the usual professions of penitents, and desire communion, should be gratified in their requests: Upon the whole, therefore, ^h I determined to abide by your opinion; that in our dispensation of the ministry committed to us, we might not appear to differ from each other, but to proceed as we ought to do, with a perfect concurrence of sentiment and practice. As to the case of all, besides the sick; notwithstanding the tickets which they produce from the martyrs; I have ordered that whole matter to be post-poned, till my return among my people; that so when it shall have pleased God to give peace to his church, divers bishops may assemble upon this occasion; and then with the assistance of your counsel also, we may be able, I hope, to order and resettle every thing upon its former foundations. My dear brethren, I bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XX.
§. 2.

The tempera-
ment observed
by our author
in the case of
the lapsed.

^h I determined to abide.] This is a manner of speaking, which proves our author to have been at his own liberty, to have been swayed by no one's authority, but only by prudential motives.



A. D. 250.
Epistle XXI.



EPISTLE XXI.

Written during our author's retirement.

Was written from Rome to Carthage; and, with those which here follow, will give us a just state of the controversy about the case of the lapsed. This letter could not come (as some have imagined) from Rome, with that of the Roman clergy to our author, sent by the subdeacon Clemen-
tius; because it is otherwise certain, that their bishop Fabian suffered in January, and they sent as early notice as they could of it to Carthage, which therefore might well reach thither in February; and it is also certain, that this letter of Celerinus was written after Easter, which he saith he had spent in lamentation and sorrow; so that it might probably enough be written in the month of April, A. D. 250; and as it relates to the same case with the five succeeding, which St. Cyprian sent to the Roman clergy, accompanied with a letter from himself to them, N^o. 27. Our right reverend editor hath fixed it at the head of them.

Celerinus to Lucianus sendeth greeting.



IN writing this to you, my honoured brother, I feel my self affected with different sentiments of joy and sorrow; of joy, for that I hear of your imprisonment for the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of your confessing it before the rulers of this world; but of sorrow, for that I could never once have a letter from you, since the time of my parting with you. And my concern for this is increased upon me, since you have not been pleased to give me the least intimation how you do, nor how things stand with you, tho' you knew that *Montanus*, our common brother, was coming out of prison from you to me. This, I acknowledge, is no unusual thing with the servants of God, those of them especially who are called to the confession of his name. I am well aware, that none of them regard the concerns of this world, as living always in hope of an heavenly crown. For this indeed was the excuse I made for you in my own mind, that you had forgot to write to me. Yet I think, under the very same circumstances, I may say on behalf of one of the meanest of your brethren, if I may be so bold as to assume that title, *Celerinus* should certainly have been heard of. For indeed when I was in the same condition of sealing my confession with my blood, I did not forget my brethren, nor my old acquaintance; but took notice of them by my letters, and I my self, with all belonging to me, do still retain the same affectionate remembrance of them. If my letter should not reach you, before you are baptized in the sacred laver of your own blood; I beg, in that case, of our Lord and Saviour, what otherwise I would beg of you; but if you receive

^a Under the very same circumstances. The passage is exceedingly perplexed and obscure; as the whole epistle is indeed very low. I have endeavoured to give it such a sense, as I could guess it might be designed for; but as I am not sure, I have done right; the reader shall have the words, as they stand in my copies. Bishop Fell's thus: *Nam ut tunc quoque de infimo tuo vel fratre dicam, si fuero dignus, Celerinus audiretur.* Pamelius thus: *Nam ut tibi quoque de infimo tuus vel frater dicat, si fuero dignus Celerinus audire;* which is so very obscure, that he ingenuously confesses he can make nothing of it. Rigaltius reads it so too, without any remark upon it.

^b Sealing my confession. In tam florida confessione; i. e. a confession which drew blood from him in the torture to which it exposed him; tho' it extended not to life.

^c What otherwise I would beg. Vix. the pardon of the offenders, *Numeria* and *Candida*, whose case we shall presently hear of.

my

my letter, I beseech you return an answer to it. So may he, whose name you have confessed, honour you at last ^d with his glorious crown! For I am firmly persuaded, that, tho' we should see one another no more in this world, when Christ hath assigned us that crown, we shall embrace each other. Beg of him therefore, that he would admit me into your number, and make me a partaker with you of that signal honour. I am at present, however, under great affliction, and do not (I call God to witness) forget your former condescension and kindness, which are as much in my thoughts, as if you were in my company. Wherefore, ^e I intreat you, to grant me my request, and condole with me upon the ruinous state of my sisters, who in this juncture of distress and desolation have fallen away from Christ. For they have been prevailed with to offer sacrifice, in the heathen worship, and thereby have provoked our Lord to anger, which to us is very clear and apparent: For whose crimes I weep day and night, amidst the solemnities of our ^f Easter-festival, and have spent all the time of it to this moment in sackcloth and ashes, and shall go on to do so, till our Lord Jesus Christ shall vouchsafe to extend his assistance towards them; and till you, by your self, or some other of those illustrious persons who shall be admitted to the honour of the martyr's crown, will be pleased to take compassion on them, and obtain the pardon of their crying sin. For I well remember how good you were used to be, and therefore doubt not of your taking your part in our common grief, for the lapse of our sisters, *Numeria* and *Candida*; to whom, since we, as brethren, are related, we should be the more watchful for their recovery. And I cannot but believe and hope, that Christ our Lord will have some regard to their penance and good works, which they perform under it; whereof our colleagues with us in banishment, who are come hither from your parts, are both witnesses and partakers; and from whom you will hear of their diligence in them; so that I cannot doubt, but that if you, his martyrs, will intercede with him on their behalf, our Lord will grant whatever you ask of him. For I hear that you

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXI.

^d With his glorious crown.] Viz. of martyrdom; where we see how ambitious these good men were of it. See more of this in note [where is now the persecution, &c.] §. the last, of the exhortation to martyrdom.

^e I intreat you to grant me my request.] This request was to take pity upon the case of his lapsed sisters; and as a martyr, to procure for them the peace of the church. *Baronius* here hath interposed an ingenious conjecture upon the original of the confessors or martyrs privilege in this affair. (Upon the year of Christ 253, §. 60.) The custom (saith he) seems hence to have taken its rise: The lapsed were sent by their bishop to the martyrs or confessors, to ask their pardon in particular, for the scandal given to the church; as being the persons whose sufferings had most distinguished them; whilst the lapsed, thro' their cowardice, had offended against them more particularly, by deserting that cause, in which they exposed their lives, and were content to endure all the hardships which attended their perseverance in it. The lapsed, themselves, by this procedure, were likely to be brought to the greater shame and sorrow for their sin; and the martyrs, by the honour of this application to them, were encouraged to proceed, and others were the more inclined to follow their example. They signified the application which had thus been made to them by the bishop's order, to the bishop; and, with it, their desire, that the persons so applying, might be restored to the peace of the church. But what was thus innocent in its original, took another turn in its progress, and martyrs hence grew so assuming, that bishops had much ado to preserve their power; they were thenceforward for extorting that peace of the church, for which at first they were only intercessors. To this purpose the learned cardinal. To which bishop *Fell* hath added, that they went so far, as even to take upon them the nomination of a bishop to the see of *Rome*; for *Novatian* pretended, that he was chosen by certain confessors. But at last a question here arises, how *Celerinus* came to write from *Rome* to *Carthage*, for *Lucian's* intercession on the behalf of his lapsed sisters; when the fact of their lapse was committed at *Rome*; and *Lucianus* was then a prisoner at *Carthage*? Was it, that the privilege of martyrs extended all the world over? As the martyrologies of one church, did often recite indifferently the martyrs of another? Or, that the persecution at *Rome* was milder, and seldom reached in that juncture, so far as life; so that there were not properly and strictly any martyrs there, who could leave behind them any tickets on their behalf? Or, that *Numeria* and *Candida*, tho' sojourning then at *Rome*, and lapsing there, were however members of the church of *Carthage*, and so the peace of that church was first to be granted them? Or, was it, finally, that the see of *Rome* was at that time vacant, and the restoration of peace belonged, if not solely, yet more eminently to a bishop; and therefore the resort was to the see of *Carthage*, where a bishop then sat? These are questions started by our most learned editor; and as he hath thought fit to leave them to the reader's judgment; so do I; with this farther hint to him; that he may hence observe the great solicitude of good men in those days, for the privilege and advantage of communion with the church.

^f Easter festival.] Which, as *Tertullian* observed of it, (*de Coron. Milit. c. 3.*) lasted from Easter day to Whitsunside. Bishop *Fell*.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXI.

Psal. 20. 4.

have also ^s entered your self into the service of the confessors; in which you will give me leave to congratulate with you the success of those wishes, which I have often heard from you, viz. to be imprisoned for his name's sake, and to have no other bed but the hard ground to lie upon; which is now your lot; and therewith is verified what we find written in the book of *psalms*; *The Lord grant thee according to thy own heart.* According to which, you are become a kind of bishop to these confessors, and God accepts the services you do them in that capacity. Wherefore I beseech and conjure you, my worthy friend, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that you would report this case to mine and your brethren, my much honoured friends, and obtain of them, that whosoever in their number shall first be called to the crown of martyrdom, would leave behind him a ticket, on behalf of our sisters *Numeria* and *Candida*, whereby ^b their foul offence may be forgiven them. As to the case of *Eteusa*; God is my witness, that I have all along ⁱ endeavoured to reclaim her, she having purchased off the necessity to which they were driving her, of offering sacrifice in heathen worship: But as she ^k advanced no farther than the *Tria-fata*, and then came back again; I am fully satisfied, that she offered no sacrifice. Upon hearing these several cases, the clergy here have directed them to continue, as they are, till they have got a bishop. But as you, who are friends of Christ, and honoured with the privilege of being his witnesses, may, and will, we trust, by your prayers and intercessions, obtain a dispensation for them; I beseech you, my dear and ever-honoured friend *Lucianus*, to comply with my request herein; and report this case to my honoured brethren the confessors with you, that thro' their help our sisters may be relieved: So may Christ bestow that crown upon you, to which not only your present confession of his name hath entitled you, but the sanctity which hath run thro' the tenour of your life; and by which you have set an example of all holy conversation, as well as born your *testimony* to it: And this, my honoured brother, you may be pleased to understand, is not my single desire; but *Statius* and *Severianus*, and indeed all the confessors who came hither from your parts, join in it with me; who were met in the harbour by these our sisters, and received by their procurement a commodious passage from thence to the city: There are 65 of them entered upon this ser-

^s Entered your self into the service of the confessors.] *Floridorum ministerium percepisse*; i. e. you have undertook to be their agent; and to perform for them all necessary offices; such as reading the scriptures to them; exhorting, encouraging, and persuading them, and ministering in every thing to their several necessities; in which respects a little afterwards *Lucianus* was said to be a kind of bishop to them; perhaps he communicated also any requests they should make, by writing to the church, or assembly, next to them; and received their answers. The *Floridi confessores* have been already noted to be those, who lost their blood, tho' not their life, in the confession of Christ. These were esteemed as in the next degree to martyrs; and an avowed entrance upon their service, was accounted a special act of christian piety. *Lucianus* therefore distinguished his merit peculiarly, when being himself one of their number, he entered into the service of the rest. From what follows, we find it was judged a reason for the relaxation of *Candida's* and *Numeria's* penance, that they had engaged in this service.

^b Their foul offence may be forgiven.] *Pamelius* would hence infer, that this intercession of the martyrs remitted both *guilt* and *punishment* to the offenders: But the remission of their *guilt* is plainly here referred to our Lord; of whom *Celerinus* saith he could not doubt, but that he would grant it, if *Lucianus* and his brethren-confessors would ask it of him; and the relaxation of the penalty was apparently the thing in question; viz. the taking off their suspension from the communion of the church; and even in this we know that the martyrs now stretched their privilege.

ⁱ Endeavoured to reclaim her.] *Eteusam semper appellavi*, are the words of *Celerinus*; which, indeed, are very obscure, as the main of the epistle is: But *Rigaltius* saith, they mean his recalling her when she was forced away to the capitol, in order to sacrifice; and as to *Eteusa*; Mr. *Dodwel* supposes it meant *Candida*; as if he had said, *ἀτυχῆσα*, (i. e. unhappy woman) or *ἀκούσα*, i. e. one who went unwillingly, whose guilt was therefore the less.

^k Advanced no farther than the *Tria-fata*.] This was a remarkable place in the Roman forum; and by saying she went no farther than that; it was apparent, that she stopped short of the capitol, which was the place of sacrifice. She found means, in the way, of bribing the officer, and so of escaping the trial, to which they were carrying her; and perhaps of obtaining from that officer a ticket, signifying, that she had, though she had not really sacrificed; more of which hath been noted on the case of the *lapsed*. Mr. *Dodwel* follows the conjecture of *Gronovius*, who makes it *Tryphasta*, alluding to the *δρῶπαιον*, the cancelli or bars within which the magistrate sat in the capitol.

vice,

vice, and to this day they have been exceedingly diligent in all good offices towards the confessors, who continue lodged and accommodated by them. I ought to press upon you no farther, as knowing your prompt inclinations to all acts of kindness. *Macarius* and his sisters, *Cornelia* and *Emerita*, salute you; rejoicing in the blood which your confession hath cost you; as in general do all our brethren; and more particularly *Saturninus*, who hath also encountered the devil, and bravely confessed the name of Christ, when put to the torture for it: He likewise joins in my request with all earnestness. Your brethren *Calphurnius* and *Maria*, with the rest, do moreover salute you. I am farther, to acquaint you, that I have written to your brethren, my honoured friends, and beg you would read my letter to them.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXI.

¹ The torture.] *Pœna unguicularum*. We have none but a general word for this sort of punishment, the thing being out of date with us. But the *ungula* was a tormenting-instrument of iron, which pricked the sides of the person it was applied to, in order to extort from him what the magistrate intended.



EPISTLE XXII.

Epistle XXII.

The preceeding letter is sufficient introduction to this which follows, and which was written in answer to it.

Written during our author's retirement.

LUCIANUS to his honoured friend, 'if he may be so bold as to assume the title of his colleague, wisheth all health in the Lord.

I Received your letter, my dearest brother, in which you have heaped such obligations upon me, that the weight of them well-nigh oppresses me, and abates of the satisfaction which my hearing from you would otherwise have given me: I could not indeed but take a great deal of pleasure in reading what came from your hands, after so long an expectation, and such earnest desires of it; and in your remembrance of me with so much condescension, saying to me, *If I may assume the title of your brother*; though I only confessed the name of Christ, with a good deal of terror, before an inferior magistrate; whereas you, through the grace of God, not only intimidated the great dragon himself, the fore-runner of antichrist; but plainly gained your point of him, by those gallant words which have convinced me, what a strenuous assertor you are of the faith, and how jealous of any one's surpassing you in a firm adherence to the gospel of Christ. I rejoice at the progress you make agreeably to such beginnings. But now, my dear friend, shortly to be numbered among the

§. 1.

* If he may be so bold, &c.] This is a compliment to *Celerinus*, in *Celerinus's* own words, who in the preceding epistle, had said; *If I may be so bold as to assume the title of one of the meanest of your brethren*.

^b The forerunner of antichrist.] *Metatorem antichristi*; a metaphor taken from persons sent before an army to measure out ground for it; a quarter-master, or the like. Here the person designed by it, was the Emperor himself (*Decius*) in whose presence *Celerinus* made such a gallant confession, that the Emperor was discouraged by it, and desisted from the torture. As to my translation of the words which follow, there is either such a defect in the *Vatican* and *Bodleian* copies, which are the only ones wherein these two epistles are found; or else such an inaccuracy of style (as certainly there was great want of elegance, which was however supplied by an abundance of piety) in these two writers, that I can only guess at their sense, with our learned editor, whom I follow in my construction of this passage.

martyrs,

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXII.

martyrs, I must express to you the concern which your letter gave me, as to our sisters, who are mentioned in it; and whom, I heartily wish, we might have remembered, without that grievous offence whereof they have been guilty; we should not *then* have needed to mourn for them, as *now* we do. Mean while you are to be informed of what hath lately passed amongst us. When the blessed martyr *Paulus* was living, he called me to him, and said; "*Lucian*, I charge you in the presence of Christ, that whosoever, after my departure out of this life, shall ask of you the peace of the church, you give it to them ^c in my name." All of us in truth, whom it hath pleased God ^d to call to himself in this time of distress and persecution, have agreed together in this matter, that we would grant the peace of the church to every one of our lapsed brethren. You see, therefore, my brother, how *Paulus* hath recommended his part in this affair to me; and indeed we were unanimous in our sentiments, that no one should be excepted out of this relaxation; when we were ordered, by sentence from the Emperor, to dye by famine and drouth, and accordingly were shut up in two dungeons, without any provision for quenching our thirst, or satisfying our hunger, and were moreover in great danger of being stifled with smoke; and upon the whole our sufferings were more than could be endured; but in some time we were a little enlarged, and seemed, in comparison with our former state, to breathe the free air, and to have a clear sky before us. Wherefore, my brother, ^e salute *Numeria* and *Candida*, according to the directions of *Paulus*, and of the other martyrs, whose names I have here subjoined; viz. of *Bassus*, who dyed in the mines; of *Mappalicus*, who expired upon the torture; of *Fortunio*, who deceased in prison; of *Paulus*, who just survived the torture, and then departed; of *Fortuna*, *Victorinus*, *Victor*, *Herenus*, *Credula*, *Harena*, *Donatus*, *Firmus*, *Venustus*, *Fructus*, *Julia*, *Martial*, and *Aristo*, who were starved to death in prison, God so permitting; whom you will shortly hear that I have accompanied: For this day, wherein I write my letter, is the eighth from our being remanded again to our closer confinement; and before those eight days, for five days together, we had once a day, about the middle of it, only a morsel of bread and a small allowance of water, distributed to us by measure. Wherefore, my brother, when those sisters of ours, concerning whom you have written, and such others likewise whose case is the same, and of whom you know our minds, ^f have laid their cause before their bishop, and made a solemn confession of their sin; let them receive the peace of the church; as soon as ever our Lord shall have begun to give his peace to the church with you, ^g as he hath done here; for this is agreeable to the directions of the martyr *Paulus*, and to our common sentiments. All my colleagues in general salute you; and do you salute from us such confessors of our Lord, as are amongst you, whose names you signified to me; among whom are *Saturninus*, with his family and colleague, *Macharius*, *Cornelia*, and *Emerita*; *Calphurnius* and *Maria*, *Sabina*, *Specina*, and the sisters, *Januaria*, *Dativa*, and *Donata*. We likewise salute *Saturus*, with his family, *Bassianus*, and in general all your clergy; as also *Uranus*, *Alexius*, *Quintianus*, *Colonica*, and others whose names I have not specified, which I hope they will excuse to me, and impute to my fatigue

^c In my name.] This was somewhat too peremptory and unguarded; it should rather have been in the name of Christ.

^d To call to himself.] *Lucian* looked upon himself, and the rest who were in prison, as so called, tho' they were yet in the body.

^e Salute.] This was an evidence of granting peace to them; for otherwise it was held unlawful (according to that of 2 John 11.) to bid them God speed.

^f Have laid their cause before their bishop.] Tho' it was very irregular to grant the peace of the church so peremptorily, and with so little deference to the bishop; yet we see the form was still preserved of laying their cause before him, and of making a solemn confession of their sins.

^g As he hath done here.] Tho' *Lucian*, with some others who had been before in prison, were not set at liberty; yet the persecution abated by this time, and christians were not so fought out as before.

and weariness. I heartily wish your welfare; commend me to *Alexius* and *Getulicus*, and the goldsmiths, and their sisters. My sisters *Januaria* and *Sophia*, whom I specially recommend to you, salute you.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXII.



EPISTLE XXIII.

Epist. XXIII.

Our author having written to his clergy and people, and transmitted copies of those letters to Rome, wherein he declared his opinion, that the restoration of the lapsed should be postponed, till the affairs of the church should be fully settled, in peaceable and quiet times; Lucianus, about the month of July, A. D. 250, wrote this letter, in the name of the whole body of confessors, to St. Cyprian; wherein he peremptorily demanded that the peace of the church should forthwith be granted to such as had approved their good behaviour after their lapse, without leaving him a negative upon the question; and insisted moreover, that this demand should be notified by our author to the other bishops of his province; which caused both to him and them a great deal of odium and trouble.

Written in our author's retirement.

The whole body of confessors to Pope CYPRIAN sendeth greeting.

YOU are to understand, that we have granted the peace of the church to all our lapsed brethren, ^b who shall have behaved themselves inoffensively, and to your satisfaction, since the commission of their crime; and it is our farther pleasure, that you should notify ^c this determination of ours to the other bishops of your province. ^d We wish you to maintain peace and communion with the holy martyrs. Given under the hand of *Lucian*, ^e in the presence of an exorcist and reader from among the clergy.

^a We have granted.] They took upon them, in a very imperious way, to be masters, when they should have been only intercessors. See note on §. 15. of the case of the lapsed [that I may beseech God] where it is observed, that they do not hence intimate any form wherein these lapsed were restored, or absolved; but only that they were restored; and that after a very irregular manner.

^b Who shall have behaved, &c.] Tho' the whole strain of this notification be much too imperious, and couched in terms of too little deference to the bishop; yet still he was to judge of the behaviour of the penitents; and the confessors meant no more, than to shorten the time of their penance, who had, in other respects, behaved to the bishop's satisfaction. See this passage again referred to in epistle 26. and there farther noted.

^c This determination.] Hanc formam; see the importance of the word in note on epistle 19.

^d We wish you to maintain, &c.] These words imply a threat to our author; that if he did not comply with the terms of their letter, they would have no communion with him, (bishop Fell;) which, by the way, was a schismatical menace.

^e In the presence of, &c.] All commerce between christians, in matters concerning their religion, was in those times very dangerous, and clergy-men were always the persons whom bishops made use of to send their dispatches by. So in this letter, which assumed the bishop's office of granting peace, *Lucian* hath it attested by two of the clergy, tho' he did not add their names; perhaps out of caution.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXIV.

EPISTLE XXIV.

Written in our Soon after the former letter, Caldonius wrote to our author, and to the clergy of his church, upon the case of those who had lapsed, and afterwards repenting of their sin, suffered banishment and confiscation; and asked their advice, whether they should have the peace of the church immediately granted them, in consideration of their retracting their error, by such a signal example of a quite contrary practice.

• CALDONIUS to CYPRIAN, and to his fellow-presbyters at Carthage, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



THE difficulty of the times is, I confess, a good reason for our not being too forward in granting the peace of the church: Yet I thought the case of those, who, after they had been drawn in to join with the heathen sacrifices, submitted upon the next trial to banishment, deserved some exception; and therefore I have written to you upon it. My own opinion is, that by manifesting their repentance in such a distinguished manner, and by leaving their houses and estates to follow Christ; they have sufficiently wiped off the stain of their former guilt. Thus Felix, who exercised the office of a presbyter under Decimus, and who is my near neighbour, and particularly well known to me; Victoria his wife, and Lucius, all faithful persons, have submitted to banishment, and left their possessions, which are now escheated to the exchequer. Added to these, there is a woman likewise whose name is Bona, who had been dragged by her husband to sacrifice with the heathens, though she is not conscious of any crime voluntarily committed by her; for they held her hands by force, and so they, rather than she, were the persons who sacrificed, she crying out all the while, *You have sacrificed, and not I*, and so they sent her away and banished her; wherefore when these several persons desired the peace of the church, having this to say for themselves; "We are returned to the faith of Christ, which we had abandoned, have submitted to penance for our sin, and have confessed Christ in the most publick manner;" though I am clearly of opinion, that their request should be granted; yet I have thought fit to postpone the absolute de-

^a Caldonius. In ch. 2. part 2. §. 2. of the penitential discipline, I have called this Caldonius a presbyter of St. Cyprian; but as 'tis evident from ep. 41. and 48. that he was a bishop in the year 251; and as our author calls him his colleague in ep. 26. it is very probable that he was a bishop when he wrote this epistle, though it doth not appear what the name of his see was. He directed this letter to St. Cyprian first; and if he could not be found, then to his clergy who were upon the spot, whom he calls fellow-presbyters, notwithstanding that he was himself a bishop, as St. Peter in 1 ep. c. 5. §. 1. styles himself the like. (Comparet.)

^b Exercised the office of a presbyter. 'Tis not very certain, what the importance of the words, presbyterium subministrabat sub Decimo, is. Rigaltius saith, 'tis ministering to the clergy; as the women are said to have done to the confessors in the epistle of Celerinus, No 21. Pamalius will have it, being what now we call a curate, to Decimus; and our learned editor conjectures, that it might originally be read, presbyterum subministrabat Decimo, i. e. procured the assistance of a presbyter to Decimus in his last extremities. This Decimus might possibly be a predecessor of Caldonius.

^c Faithful. Is a technical term, and means those who had passed the stage of catechumens, and were baptized; and as such admitted to join with the congregation of the faithful in their most solemn offices, without forfeiting their privilege by being awarded to a state of penance.

termination

termination of this matter, till I could advise upon it with you; lest I should appear too forward in deciding it without proper consultation. If you agree among your selves what course is fittest to be taken upon this occasion, pray communicate your measures to me. I beseech you, my dear friends, to salute our common friends. I heartily wish you all happiness and prosperity.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXIV.



EPISTLE XXV.

Epistle XXV.

Is our author's answer to the foregoing letter of Caldonius.

Written in his retirement.

WE have received your letter, dear brother, which expresses to us your great modesty, as well as your sincere and religious conduct; nor ought we to wonder, when a man so well acquainted, as you are, with the rules and precepts of the gospel, doth every thing with prudence and due deliberation. You were certainly very right in your opinion, for granting the peace of the church to our brethren; which they had so well deserved by their penitence, and by the honour they had gained in their confession of our Lord; as having ^a justified themselves by their words, which had before condemned them: Wherefore, since they have effectually removed all scandal, and, through the assistance of our Lord, have wiped off the stain of their former guilt, by their *after-courage* and gallantry; they ought not to ^b lie under the power of the devil, like persons conquered by him; who, by submitting to banishment and confiscation, have raised themselves up again, and stand firm and vigorous in the cause of Christ. I wish with all my heart, that all other penitents, who have fallen in the persecution, would take the same course for recovering the ground they have lost, which the persons have done, who are mentioned in your letter. What our conduct here hath been, with regard to those who have pressed so hard upon us, and would even have extorted from us by force, the peace of the church, for which they were so importunate and hasty; you will learn from the packet I have herewith sent you, consisting of five letters written upon that occasion to our clergy, and people, and martyrs, and confessors. These letters have received the approbation of divers of our colleagues, to whom I have sent the copies of them; and they have returned me answers signifying their concurrence in opinion and practice with me, agreeably to the rules of catholic faith. And of this I would beg you to transmit an account to such of our colleagues, as you have an opportunity of acquainting with it; that, as far as is possible, our ministry may ^c proceed in the same steps and measures, according to the will of our common Lord. My dear brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

^a *Justified themselves.*] This is probably an allusion to that passage in the gospel; *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* Matt. 12. 37. Bp. Fell.

^b *Lie under the power of the devil.*] *Sub diabolo quasi prostrati.* They who were out of the church, were considered as under the power of the devil; and the word *prostrati* may farther allude to that humble posture, wherein the penitents of the primitive church sued for a restoration to it.

^c *Proceed in the same steps.*] Though this was no point of doctrine, but of discipline, wherein different churches might lawfully vary from each other; yet our author judged it more expedient (as it doubtless was) that there should be as great an harmony as possible amongst them, even in things which it was not absolutely necessary for them to consent in; such as these matters of external regimen.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXVI.



EPISTLE XXVI.

Written in his
retirement.

In this letter our author acquaints his clergy, with the subject of the foregoing ones; particularly that of Caldonius; and of Lucian, which was written in the name of all the confessors: St. Cyprian was not for yielding to them, but for maintaining his point, and, with it, the just authority of his see. This was written much about the same time with the former; viz. in July, A. D. 250.

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

Isai. 66. 2.



OUR Lord hath spoken, and said; *Upon whom shall I look, but upon the man, who is peaceable and humble, and who trembleth at my words?* Now as these are duties incumbent upon all of us, they are more especially so upon them, whose peculiar business it is, after their grievous lapse, to humble themselves in the sight of God; and by the sincerity and rigour of their penitential sorrows, to reconcile themselves to his favour. I have perused the letter, written to me by the whole body of confessors, which they would have me notify to all my colleagues, and in virtue of which, they expect the peace of the church should be open to all who have *behaved themselves to my satisfaction, since the commission of their crime.* Now this being a matter of such importance, that it deserves a serious debate and consultation from us all together; I dare not undertake to determine it by my self: In the mean time, therefore, I am for abiding by the tenour of those letters, which I have lately sent to you upon this occasion; copies whereof I have likewise dispatched to diverse of my colleagues; who have signified to me their approbation of my conduct, and their opinion, that I should not depart from it, till such time as God shall give peace to his church amongst us, and, with it, an opportunity for us to meet together, and to examine distinctly the case of each offender. And that you might be acquainted with the subject of *Caldonius*, my colleague's, letter to me, and of my answer to him, I have sent you with these presents copies of both; and, I beseech you, let that whole transaction be recited, and those letters be read over to our brethren, that they may thence be the better disposed to peace and patience; instead of adding fresh aggravations to their former guilt, by disobedience to their bishop, and to the rules of the gospel, and by refusing to have their case looked into, ^b as the confessors have desired. My dear brethren, I wish you all an uninterrupted course of happiness and prosperity; and beg your remembrances of me. Recommend me to all our brethren. Farewel.

^a *Behaved to my satisfaction, &c.*] See this noted in epistle 23. To which I would here add farther from *Rigaltius*, that the words, *since the commission of their crime*, refer to their penitential labours; the works of righteousness, charity, or mortification, performed by them after their offence; such as *Celerinus*, in his letter (No. 21.) to *Lucian*, mentions of *Numeria* and *Candida*, as motives to their having peace the sooner granted them; or such as *Caldonius* had mentioned to our author, (in epist. 24.) of those, who, after their lapse, wiped out the stain of it, by confessing the name of Christ, and being banished for it.

^b *As the confessors have desired.*] Our author here refers to some past intimations of the confessors to him, whereof we have mention in epistle 15, and in which they were more modest and regular: But afterwards we find, from epistle 23, that they transgressed those bounds, and were more peremptory.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXVII.

EPISTLE XXVII.

Was written in the beginning of August, this year; upon our author's receiving the letter of Lucian and the confessors, and upon the disturbance thence given to him in the case of the lapsed. Whereupon, with this 27th letter, he sent copies of the five preceding letters to the clergy of Rome; as hoping that the concurrence of their sentiments might screen him from some part of the odium which this affair had brought upon him.

Written in his retirement; and during the vacancy of the Roman see.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons of Rome, who stand fast in their most holy faith, sendeth greeting.

SINCE my former letter, wherein I acquainted you, my dear brethren, with the course of my ministry, and with my application to the business of my church, and to the discipline of it; there hath started a fresh incident, which I have judged it expedient to impart to you. You must know then, that our brother *Lucianus*, (and he too one of the confessors) strong enough indeed in faith, and ardent enough in courage, but by no means well-skilled in the knowledge of holy scriptures, hath lately attempted some very improper things, by heading the giddy populace, and giving out promiscuously to diverse people tickets, written with his own hand, in the name of *Paulus*; whereas the martyr *Mappalicus* was more reserved and cautious, and gave out no letters which were contrary to the rules of the gospel, or of the discipline appointed by it; but only, in regard to two cases which touched him very nearly, he recommended his mother and sister, who had lapsed, to the peace of the church; and *Saturninus*, after having endured the torture, suffered no such letters to go forth in his name, all the while he was in prison. But *Lucianus*, whilst *Paulus* was yet in prison, gave out diverse tickets, written with his (*Lucianus's*) own hand; and, after his departure, proceeded in the same course, suggesting that he had his (*Paulus's*) orders for so doing; not considering, that the master should rather have been obeyed than the fellow-servant. Diverse tickets have moreover been given out in the name of one *Aurelius*, a young man, who hath endured the torture, all written with the hand of *Lucianus*, because *Aurelius* could not write. To put a stop to this growing mischief, I dispatched away some letters to the persons concerned in it, whereof I sent you the copies under the cover of my last to you; in these I exhorted and besought them, to abide by the rules of the gospel, and the will of our Lord. Now after I had sent away these letters, and hoped some good

* *Tickets.*] These (the reader will remember) were orders to the bishop for admitting the persons named in them to communion: signed by martyrs and confessors, or written in their name.

b *Whilst Paulus was yet in prison.*] Before the martyr (saith bishop *Fell*) was crowned, he had no privilege of this kind; and if before his coronation (i. e. his martyrdom) he gave out any tickets to particular persons, signifying his desires, that they might be restored to the peace of the church; their names should regularly have been specified; and not, as (we read our author complaining) was the practice then introduced, in epistle 15. (let such an one, with his friends, be received to communion:;) much less was the practice of this *Paulus*, or of *Lucianus*, who quoted him for it, justifiable, in assigning over his power to any survivor, after his own death, of granting the peace of the church to all who should ask it.

c *My last.*] *Viz.* epistle 20.

A. D. 250.
EPIST. XXVII.

effect from them, that this affair might, at least, be henceforwards managed with more decency and temper; this same *Lucianus* writ^d a letter to me in the name of all the confessors, in which he hath in a manner *burst asunder*, to be sure, *very much relaxed*, all the bonds of our most holy faith, all obligations arising from the fear of God, all the directions of Christ our master, and indeed quite enervated the vigour of that discipline which is recommended to us in his gospel. For in the name of them all, he there hath acquainted me, that they have granted the peace of the church without exception or distinction; and this they would have me to notify to other bishops, of which letter of theirs I have here subjoined a copy. They have added, truly, a seeming qualification: *concerning whose behaviour after their lapse you have received satisfaction*: But this, in effect, throws all the odium and envy upon me; who, when I have entered upon the examination of each man's case and circumstance, shall find my self, perhaps, obliged to refuse the favour to many, which they insist they have received already from the martyrs and confessors. In fine, the effects of this irregular and factious practice have even now begun to shew themselves; and in divers cities of my province, the people have made insurrections against their bishops, and peremptorily demanded, that the peace of the church should forthwith be granted them, which the martyrs and confessors (as they noise it) have directed to be given them: And thus some bishops, who had not courage nor firmness enough to oppose them, have been terrified into a compliance with their bold demands. And in my own peculiar charge, some, who before were too turbulent and headstrong, and whom I had much ado, even *then*, to keep within rule, or to put off their case till I could come amongst them, have now fresh fuel added to their former fire, and have begun to break in upon me with new and peremptory demands of the peace of the church.

§. 2.
For the better
understanding
the whole
course of his
procedure, he
sends them the
several pre-
ceding letters.

Matt. 28. 19.

Acts 9. 15.

Galat. 1. 6,
7, 8, 9.

2. I have sent you a copy of what I have written to my clergy upon this occasion; as likewise of the letter written to me with great integrity, and a just sense of religion, by my colleague *Caldonius*, together with my answer to him. I have, moreover, dispatched to you copies of the letter written by that courageous and honest confessor *Celerinus*, with the answer of *Lucianus* to him; that from all these views you might be the better informed of the truth as it really stands, and of my care and diligence in the discharge of my trust; and from hence you will judge, how prudently, and modestly, and how agreeably to the character of our profession, *Celerinus* hath behaved himself; and on the other hand you will observe, how little acquainted (as I before observed) *Lucianus* is, with the rules of scripture; and how easy he hath been in his compliances, which have thrown all the difficulty upon me, and laden me with so much odium and envy: For whereas our Lord hath directed all nations to be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and so their sins to be forgiven them in such baptism; *Lucianus*, without considering the tenour of this direction, orders truly, that the peace of the church should be given, and the sins of offenders be remitted in the name of *Paulus*; and insists that he was commissioned to do so by the said *Paulus*, as you will more at large observe from his letter to *Celerinus*; wherein he seems not to have remembered, that martyrs do not make the gospel, but the gospel makes martyrs; nor, that the apostle *St. Paul*, whom our Lord hath honoured with the title of a *chosen vessel unto him*, hath in one of his epistles the following passage; *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him who called you into grace, unto another gospel; which is not*

^d A letter. ^e Vis. epistle 23. ^f The apostle St. Paul. ^g To the authority of Paul the martyr. St. Cyprian opposes that of Paul the apostle and martyr too. ^h By. Both. ⁱ Into grace. We add of Christ; as some copies have it of God, and some of Jesus Christ; but our author here, and in epist. 63. omits them all; as did his master Tertullian in *prescript. advers. baref.* c. 7. and *contr. Marcion.* l. 5. c. 2.

another; but that there be some who trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again; If any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed. In this nice conjuncture of my affairs, your letter which you writ to my clergy, arrived most seasonably; as did that from your blessed confessors, *Moses, Maximus, Nicosstratus, &c. to Saturninus, Aurelius, &c.* wherein you have all of you, adhered with firmness to the rules of the gospel, and to the vigour of its discipline. Your declarations were of great use to me, and made my work the shorter, as if a miracle had stept in to my relief; who before was labouring my point with the utmost difficulty, and stemming the popular torrent with all my strength; and it was particularly fortunate, that before you received my last letter, your opinion appeared to be the same with mine, and that we were unanimously for maintaining the vigour of evangelical discipline with all firmness. My dear brethren, I wish you now and ever all manner of prosperity.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXVII.

[Your letter.] This is not extant, nor that from the confessors of Rome to those of Carthage; but from what our author here, and in his next epistle, saith of their contents, we may be sure they were all of one mind in the subject of the debate concerning the lapsed.



EPISTLE XXVIII.

Ep. XXVIII.

This was written by our author, upon occasion of the letter sent by these confessors of Rome to those of Carthage; which proved so serviceable to his measures, as he hath hinted in the preceding epistle: The latter of which is introduction enough to our present letter, which was only designed to congratulate with them the honour they had gained by confessing Christ.

Written in his retirement, and during the vacancy of the see of Rome.

CYPRIAN to *Moses and Maximus, presbyters, and to the rest of the confessors, his dearly-beloved brethren, sendeth greeting.*

IAME had a good while ago reported to me the honours you had gained by your faith and constancy, my courageous and blessed brethren; and I was exceedingly rejoiced at such agreeable news; and congratulated with you in my own thoughts, the peculiar vouchsafement of our Lord, whereby he hath trained you up for the martyr's crown, through the confession of his name. You were assigned to us as our leaders in the great encounter of our times, and were placed in the front of the battel; as you had first set up the standard for this heavenly warfare; and afterwards, through the ardour of your courage, began the hostilities against our ghostly enemy, whom God hath permitted to rise up against us. You sustained the first fury of this growing tempest, and broke the force of it with a singular intrepidity and firmness of mind: From your auspicious beginnings

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXVIII.

beginnings all after successes must be dated. * Here indeed it hath so fallen out, that some have gone thro' the torture, till they have finished their course by martyrdom; but he who first entered the lists, and therewith set an example of gallantry to the rest of his brethren, is doubtless entitled to a share even of the martyr's honour. Your hands wore those garlands, which you sent over hither; and drank to the rest of your brethren out of that cup, which they have pledged so gloriously. And now you have added to those happy beginnings, and to the honours of your military *courage*, the example of a regular and exact *discipline*; which we have found by your letter, written with a becoming solicitude to your colleagues here, who have made the same glorious confession with your selves; therein exhorting and persuading them, strictly to abide by the rules of the gospel, and to keep those useful directions, which have been given them, with a religious exactness. Here is, therefore, another step of honour, and a fresh title added to that of your confession, for obtaining the favour of God! To stand firm as you do, and to maintain your ground, in this new encounter; not only to have exhibited in it the first specimen of gallantry and courage; but now *again* to set an example of orderly conduct, to such as would break in upon the measures of the gospel, and by their impious attempts would cancel the precepts of our Lord; these, my dear brethren, are your peculiar praises! Our Lord, when he sent forth his apostles, after his resurrection, said unto them; *All power is given unto me in heaven, and in earth; go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* And the apostle St. John, remembring what was thus enjoined by our Lord to his followers, afterwards in his epistle laid down the following rule; *Hereby we do know, that we know him, if we keep his commandments; he that saith, he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* Wherefore, when you recommend to others the keeping these commandments; in effect you keep them *your selves*. This is indeed to be a confessor, a martyr of Christ; to persevere in all things agreeably to your gallant confession; and *not* to be a martyr for our Lord, and at the same time to engage in attempts of destroying his commandments; to turn the honours he hath vouchsafed you against the interests of his service; to employ the armour wherewith he hath girded you, in a rebellious design against him; or, to sum up all in plainer words, ^b to confess Christ with your *mouths*, and to deny his gospel by your *deeds*.^c I have therefore great joy, my most faithful and courageous brethren, from the whole tenour of your conduct; and I congratulate as much with you the honour you have obtained, and ^e the *crown* which is due to your strict observance of *discipline*, as I do with our martyrs here, the glory accruing to them from their perseverance unto death. Our Lord hath distributed his favours to his church, with a great diversity, and in a very liberal manner; and various are the honours which his good soldiers gain in their several encounters; we esteem our selves partakers with you in your honours, and reckon *your glory ours*; who have jointly with you the happiness of observing the vouchsafements of our Lord to our present times; wherein we see his *living* servants approving them-

^a Here indeed it hath so fallen out. At Rome the persecution was less hot and furious, and did not extend to life. But at Carthage it was more severe and raging. Our author therefore compliments the Roman confessors, and seems to lessen the merit of his own, who had, some of them, resisted unto blood, from the consideration of the Roman confessors being *foremost* in the encounter, and setting the example which animated the rest.

^b To confess Christ. The reader, 'tis presumed, will easily perceive, that this whole passage is levelled at the conduct of our author's disorderly confessors, whilst he is celebrating the praises of these Roman behaviour, which was as true to the *discipline*, as it had been to the *doctrine* of Christ.

^c The crown. This was most emphatically the martyr's honour; and to be *crowned*, is a technical term with our author, signifying to be *martyred*; so that when he ascribed this to the confessors for their strict observance of *discipline*, after their confession, he strained his compliment to the very high-

selves

selfes in all things; and his soldiers, who have *lost* their *lives* in his quarrel, crowned for their service. My most courageous and blessed brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, and beg your remembrance of me.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXVIII.



EPISTLE XXIX.

Epist. XXIX.

That our author might send the foregoing letters to Rome, in the regular order of the church, and according to its received custom; he was obliged to ordain a reader and a subdeacon for that purpose, in his retirement; as having at that time no more clergy than were necessary to supply the current occasions of his church. And this he notifies to his clergy in this epistle, written to them in the same month and year with the preceding.

Written in his retirement.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons sendeth greeting.

THAT no letter written to me, or answered by me, might escape your notice; I have sent you copies both of that which I lately received, and of my answer to it; the latter of which I hope will prove agreeable to your sentiments. I am also to acquaint you, that I have written upon a very pressing occasion to the clergy of Rome. And because I was obliged, you know, ^a to take the bearers out of my clergy; and was moreover sensible, that ^b diverse at this time are out of the way, and the few remaining no more than the daily services of the church require; I found my self under a necessity of ordaining some new ones; to dispatch upon this errand. Wherefore you are to take notice, that I have ordained *Saturus* a reader, and the confessor *Optatus* a subdeacon; whom we had all ^c before agreed to place in the rank and degree, next to that of the clergy; when upon *Easter* day we made one or two trials of *Saturus*, in reading; or when, we were approving our readers before the ^d teaching presbyters, and then appointed *Optatus*, from among the readers, to be a teacher

^a To take the bearers out of my clergy.] All messages from church to church, were dispatched by some of the clerical order; and the more important the occasion of the message was, so much higher was the order of the person sent; accordingly in the epistles of St. Ignatius, we have mention of bishops and presbyters, as well as of deacons, sent express upon these occasions.

^b Diverse at this time out of the way.] Viz. absented on account of the persecution.

^c Before agreed to place in the rank next that of the clergy.] This was, in all likelihood, a class of men, considered as candidates for holy orders; who had a time of probation allowed them; and during that time, were tried how they could perform in the respective offices, for which they were candidates; as *Saturus* is here said to have been tried before in reading once or twice; and *Optatus* in teaching the bearers, that he might approve thereby his fitness for the advancement intended him, from being a reader, to being a teacher of the bearers; which, it seems, appertained to the office of a subdeacon. We may hence observe the great care which was used in the primitive church, as to the choice even of these lower officers among the clergy. N. B. Bishop Fell observes it as very probable, that some of our author's clergy were sent by the body, to consult him upon the occasions of his church; and then these transactions passed, to which he here alludes.

^d Teaching presbyters.] These were the stated judges of the fitness of such, as were to be the teachers (in a lower form) of the bearers. And it is hence, I think, apparent, that all presbyters were not teachers, but assisted the bishop, in other parts of his office. So that the ministry then was not solely, nor singly, a preaching ministry. *Hermas*, in vision 3, hath the mention of these teachers; and St. Paul alludes to them, in 1 Tim. 5. 17. It is very probable, that the original of this distinction was founded in extraordinary gifts, which in our author's time were not totally discontinued; nor were therefore the offices founded on them: But we read of no distinction between teaching, and other presbyters in later times,

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXIX.

teacher of the hearers; examining, with all due diligence, whether their testimonials were such, as candidates for any clerical office should always have. So that I have done nothing new in your absence, but only finished, upon a pressing occasion, what was long ago begun by common consent. My dear brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, and desire your remembrance of me. Salute all our brethren from me. Farewel.

times, when 'tis agreed, that miraculous gifts were quite ceased. The thing, however, continued all along in some form or other, and there were always in the church some *non-teaching* as well as *teaching* presbyters, when the *nominal* distinction was utterly abolished.

^c *Hearers.*] i. e. Catechumens, who were not admitted to the prayers of the church, but only to hear the scriptures and sermon, and were then dismissed. *Subdeacons* were joined with *exorcists*, to prepare these people for the solemnity of baptism.



Epistle XXX.

EPISTLE XXX.

Written during the vacancy of the Roman see.

Was written after the receipt of our author's letters to the Roman clergy, and to their confessors, (which were sent by Saturus and Opratus) in answer to the former of them; and was penned (as our author observes in his epistle to Antonianus) by Novatian; who wrote in a pure style, and not unlike to that of our author; whereby we find, that he (Novatian) before the disappointment of his pretensions upon the Roman bishoprick, was of the same opinion with our author, as to the point of reconciling the lapsed. This was written about the end of August, A. D. 250.

The presbyters and deacons, dwelling at Rome, to pope CYPRIAN send greeting.

§. 1.



Although a good conscience, which witnesseth to it self a punctual observance of God's commandments, and a steady adherence to the strict rules of evangelical discipline, is usually content with the judgment which God passeth on it; and neither feareth the censure, nor courteth the applause of any one besides him; yet they are certainly entitled to a double portion of honour, who knowing that they have no judge of their consciences but God only, yet are desirous that their ministry should have the approbation of their brethren.

^a *Dwelling.*] *Confessors.* In the first epistle, and in some others after it, I followed the conjecture of our learned editor upon this word, as if it meant those persons only who maintained their ground, and had not fallen away in the time of persecution; but here, when 'tis used by the presbyters and deacons of Rome, and applied to themselves; I suppose it designed for nothing more than to express the place of their residence.

^b *Pope Cyprian.*] Though the popes of Rome have since appropriated this title to themselves; the Roman clergy, we see, did, in the Cyprianic age, esteem it common to other bishops.

^c *No judge.*] Every bishop, we see, was in his own diocese, unaccountable to another for the management of his trust; as our author opened that matter in his first speech to the council of Carthage. The clergy of Rome knew no peculiar privilege or prerogative which their bishop had over our African prelate. If any behaved scandalously, or broached false doctrine, the rest had properly no power over him; but as they had a general interest in the whole episcopate (*enjus a singulis in solidum pars omnis*), as our author said of it in his treatise of the unity of the church, §. 4. they had a power, and indeed an obligation to warn the people of him, and to withdraw themselves from such a brother as walked disorderly. But then this was a power equally entrusted with all the bishops of the church, and one had in strictness no greater share of it than another.

then.

thren. It is no wonder, therefore, brother *Cyprian*, that a man of your modesty and diligence in your trust, should pursue this course, and be fond of having us appear, not as judges of your ministry, but as associates with you in your measures; partakers with you in the just applauses of your conduct, and equally with you entitled to the honour of your counsels, as the vouchers of them. For we shall alike be esteemed the authors of that reglement, which we espouse unanimously; nor is there any thing more useful in times of quiet, nor in the storms of persecution more necessary, than to maintain the discipline of the Gospel in its proper vigour; which whosoever shall relax, will unavoidably fluctuate and waver in a perpetual variety of uncertain motions; the business committed to him, will either stand still, or move up and down without rule or compass; and, like a master of a ship, when the steerage is wrested out of his hands, he will be in great danger of striking^d his ship (the church, whereof he is governour) upon a rock: So that it is evident there is no safety for the church, unless its enemies be stopped, as the waves are, by a firm and steady opposition; and discipline be preserved, like the steerage in the master's hands, without losing hold of it.

2. Nor is this a measure upon which we entered but as yesterday; nor have we just now found out an extempore preservative against the assaults of wicked men; but you may read the steadiness of our faith, and our strict adherence to discipline, as things of long standing. For the apostle would never have bestowed upon us such large commendations, as he did in saying; *Your faith is spoken of throughout the world*; unless our present steadiness had derived its root even from those times; and therefore to degenerate from such virtues, or to forfeit the honour of such a testimony, would be a crime of the most enormous magnitude. For it is really less scandalous; never to have risen to any pitch of glory, than to fall from it when once attained; less criminal, never to have been entitled to the honour of an advantageous testimony, than to lose or forfeit it when once possessed of it; less shameful, to have lived always under a mean and ignoble character, than to be^e disinherited, as it were, of our interest in the gospel, and therewith deprived of the praises which once were bestowed upon our adherence to it; since whatsoever hath been reported to any one's advantage, if he takes no care to preserve his character, will turn to his prejudice; and be imputed thenceforwards to him as a grievous fault.

3. That there is a great deal of truth in what we now advance, is apparent from our^f former letter to you; wherein we clearly declared our selves against the practice of those who, in effect, avowed themselves infidels, by producing scandalous subscriptions; as though any could think they escaped the snares of the devil, when by the profession they made upon that occasion, their consciences were, in truth, no less entangled, than if they had gone in their own persons to the heathen altars: We likewise condemned the^h receivers and sign-

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXX.

§. 2.
The faith of
the Romans
of old com-
mended by the
apostle.
Rom. 1. 8.

§. 3.
The crime of
such as sub-
scribed, little
different from
their's who
directly denied
Christ.

^d His ship (the church, &c.) The comparison of the church to a ship, is very frequent in ecclesiastical writers; and accordingly the *confusions* (in b. 2. c. 57.) represent the form of its external building, as resembling the make of a ship.

^e Disinherited.] *Exheredatus fidei factum*. i. e. faith *Rigaltius*; a denier of the faith of Christ; (alluding to the case of the lapsed) and therewith forfeiting all title to its recompence.

^f Former letter.] This is not extant, though the purport of it appears from hence.

^h Scandalous subscriptions.] Those which are mentioned in this epistle were of two sorts; one, whereby the persons named in it subscribed themselves worshippers of *Mars*, (suppose) *Jupiter*, &c. and offered this note to the magistrate in their own vindication; though they did not actually pay the worship, they so professed, to those deities. The second was a subscription to a note sent them from the magistrate, by their own or their friends procurement, which they received and signed; and so, because they did not offer such an one of their own accord, they held themselves the more excusable. There was also a third sort mentioned in the epistle to *Anonius*, whereby the person who sent the note owned himself a christian, but offered money to the magistrate, if he would excuse his sacrificing, and certify that he had done it. *Rigaltius*.

ⁱ Receivers and signers.] *Qui accipere scripsit*. This alludes to the 2^d sort of subscriptions mentioned in the preceding note; and refers to such as by their own, or their friends agency, had procured notes ready drawn up, which they received and signed. So *Rigaltius* conjectures upon this obscure passage.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXX.

Matt. 10. 32.
Luke 12. 8.
Rom. 10. 9.

ers of all such notes, as well as the *formers* of them, notwithstanding their plea, that they were not present at drawing them up; inasmuch as to direct or procure the drawing them up, was perfectly the same thing with being present at it. For he comes in for a share of the guilt, who is any way instrumental to it; nor is he to be esteemed as innocent, who, though he hath not really committed the crime, yet hath his name read publicly, as if he had: And whereas the sum and substance of the gospel is understood to be comprised in this one duty of confessing the name of Christ; he who resorts to tricks and evasions for excusing himself from it, doth in effect deny his master; and he who would *seem* to have obeyed the laws and edicts which have been promulged against the gospel, by *seeming* to have complied with them, hath *virtually* done it. Finally; we have born, as became us, our concurrent testimony, against all who¹ have polluted their hands and mouths with execrable sacrifices; ^k their minds we have considered as before polluted, and from thence the pollution was derived upon their hands and mouths.

§. 4.
That it was
the greatest
cruelty to use
the lapsed
with too
much lenity.

4. God forbid that ever the *Roman* church should be so easy and compliant, or have so little regard to the interests of religion, as to relax the severity and vigour of its discipline, and therewith to weaken the authority of the gospel! Or when many of our brethren have already *fallen*, and more are daily *falling*, that she should be too hasty in applying to them the remedy of communion, which, so applied, can do them no sort of service; but, through a mistaken compassion, would fester the wound received by their first offence; and to their greater destruction, deprive the unhappy souls of the advantages they might reap from a true repentance! For how is it possible, that the medicinal grace of forgiveness should have a regular process; if he who hath the dispensation of it, becomes fond of encreasing the danger, ^l by contracting the time which should be allowed for the removal of it, in the way of a legitimate and proper penance? If he chuses only to skin over the wound, and will not allow due time for the operation of his medicines, nor for closing it by surer and slower degrees? This, if we would speak out plainly, is not to *cure*, but *kill*.

§. 5.
The letters of
the confessors
did much con-
tribute to the
support of dis-
cipline.

5. Indeed you have letters of the same tenour with ours from the confessors, who are still in prison for the glorious cause of their confession, and whom their faith hath animated to this good fight of the gospel, and brought them off with honour and victory from one encounter; and in these they have asserted the just severity of evangelical discipline, and have ^m rescued the church from the odium of these mischievous intercessions. It would have been very difficult, otherwise, to have healed the breaches made in the discipline of the gospel; and ⁿ none were certainly so fit to insist upon it in its fullest extent and rigour, as they who had delivered themselves up to the rage of their enemies, to be mangled and tortured for the sake of the gospel; and indeed they would have justly forfeited the honour of all their sufferings, had they taken any occasion from them to give up the interests and authority of the gospel: For he who is in possession of any privilege, and adheres not to it

¹ Have polluted.] After having censured the two common subterfuges, the *Roman* clergy proceed to declare against the fact it self.

^k Their minds before polluted.] They were loose in their principles, before the trial came; else they would never so soon and easily have yielded: The overt-act only manifested their preceding disposition and frame of mind.

^l By contracting the time.] *Viz.* of penance, and thence of admitting them too hastily to communion. Whereas in a more regular and slower process, the souls which had thus sinned, had been more secure of pardon.

^m Rescued the church from the odium.] It was invidious for the church to deny the intercessions of martyrs and confessors; and at the same time inconvenient to comply with them. So that the confessors by writing to our author agreeably to the tenour of this epistle, rescued the church from both inconveniences.

ⁿ None were certainly so fit.] No one could object to them, that they laid hardships upon others, which they would not, themselves, submit to; since in their *confession*, they had endured all sorts of hardships.

*in the very point, from whence he derives it, forfeits in truth and justice the very privilege it self, whilst he is breaking in upon the tenure whereby he holds it. A. D. 250. Epistle XXX.

6. Upon this occasion we return you, as we ought, our hearty thanks, for enlightning the darkness of ^{§. 6.} *The letters of St. Cyprian had likewise been very useful to the confessors.* their prison by your most welcome letter; for visiting them, as far as you were able, in it; and for confirming their purposes, tho' their own faith and confession have proved them otherwise well founded, by the additional force of your encouragements and exhortations; for commending, as it deserved, the felicity of their successful conflict; for animating them thereby to a more ardent desire of their heavenly crown; and, for pushing on their forwardness, to gain, as we believe and hope they will, a complete and decisive victory; so that tho' the ^{§. 7.} *That the peace of the church, and the appointment of a bishop, were to be first obtained, before the lapsed should be restored.* faith of the confessors, and the grace of God, may seem to do all in this whole transaction; yet some part of the honour they shall gain in their martyrdom, may justly redound to you, and be imputed to the influence of your persuasions. But to come again to our point, which we have a little digressed from; you will herewith receive a copy of the dispatches which we have sent to Sicily.

7. We have indeed a stronger reason for postponing the determination of this affair, who, thro' the difficulties of the times, have been forced to live without a bishop, ever since the departure of that excellent man *Fabianus*, of glorious memory; so that we have none to moderate in this business, nor to take due cognizance of the case of the *lapsed*, nor to determine it, after it hath been considered, with a proper authority. Altho' we are otherwise in truth of your opinion in this important affair; that the peace of the church her self should be waited for before any thing be concluded in it; and then we may at large debate it, in a full assembly of bishops, presbyters, deacons, confessors, and such of the laity, as have stood their ground in the time of danger. For it seems to us a very invidious thing, not to take numbers into the examination of a fact, which numbers have committed; or, that any single person should pronounce upon a crime of this magnitude, which so many are concerned in; nor indeed is any determination likely to be strong or lasting; which hath not the approbation of numbers to secure its continuance. For you may see the whole world almost interested in this matter, and the desolation universally spread; and therefore it seems requisite, that the debate upon it, should be as extensive as the offence hath been: The plaister should not be narrower than the wound; nor the remedy under-proportioned to the disease; and as they who are fallen, owe their fall to precipitate measures, and to a want of due caution; so they who are trying to repair this breach, and to retrieve this misfortune, should proceed in the case with all possible deliberation and temper; lest any thing done *irregularly*, should be censured by all as done *invalidly*. Wherefore let us, who seem to have escaped the de-

*In the very point from whence he derives it.] In epistle 27, our author had said, That martyrs do not make the gospel, but the gospel makes martyrs. So that the gospel was the thing from whence the martyrs derived the honour they were possessed of. And therefore by breaking in upon its interests, they would have forfeited the honour they claimed from it.

† Their prison.] Vixit the confessors.

‡ Faith of the confessors, and grace of God.] Observe here the agency of man asserted in concurrence with the grace of God.

§ With a proper authority.] Others might consider and consult upon it; presbyters, or people; but we shall find, hereafter, what here is hinted, that the authority was solely vested in the bishop; and therefore during the vacancy of their see, the Roman clergy cared not to determine in this affair; since all acts of strict and proper authority flowed originally from the bishop.

¶ Such of the laity.] It hath been more than once observed, that in a case where the community was so far interested, all should be consulted. There were at least prudential, if not necessary reasons for this procedure. And this our most learned editor will have to be the sense and meaning, wherein the decrees of councils are said to be of no force at present, where they are not received. By which he would seem to give the people a negative in them. Tho' this, I imagine, to be more than they ever had; and the whole strain of this letter speaks of it rather as a discretionary thing, wherein the clergy took themselves to be masters of the question, than as any privilege, to which the people were entitled.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXX.

lations of this unfavourable season, ' as well as they who have fallen into the calamities of it, join our hearts, and tears, and prayers together, and beg at the throne of grace, that God would be pleased to vouchsafe peaceable and settled times to his church; in the mean time, let us fortify, comfort, and encourage each other; let us pray for them who are fallen, that they may rise again; for them who as yet stand their ground, that they may not be tempted so far as to desert it; for them who are reported to be already fallen, that they may be brought to a due sense of their crying sin, and learn not to desire a, too precipitate and suddain, restoration; but rather that their pardon may follow in its proper course upon their preceding penance; that they may shew their sense of their sin, by lending us for a while their patience; and not disturb the quiet of a (yet) unsettled church; lest they should be chargeable with the guilt of raising another persecution *within* the church, and have the imputation of being disorderly, added to the account of their other transgressions.

§. 8.

That they may
knock at the
church doors,
but not break
them open.

8. Let them knock, if they please, at the doors of the church; but let them not proceed to violence, nor to break them open. They may come as far as her threshold; but should not presume to go beyond it. They may keep watch at the entrance into the heavenly camp; but they should do it with modesty, as remembering that they have been deserters. They may resume, if they will, the humble note of prayers and supplications; but should rise no higher; much less should they presume to sound a charge. Such arms they may use, as modesty will furnish, and take again to themselves that shield of faith, which their fear of death had induced them to lay aside; but then let them remember always that it is designed as a defence to them against the *devil*, and not against the *church*, which laments their misfortune. A petition so recommended, with all becoming modesty, all fit humility, all proper patience and diligence in good works, will do them real and signal service. Let their tears and lamentations, coming from the very bottom of their hearts, plead their cause for them, and speak their shame and sorrow for their sin. Nay if they have really a just horror of their guilt, and would have the deep and dangerous wound of their consciences handled skilfully; they should be ashamed even of asking, unless it were, that their not asking the succours of the church, carries still more of danger and of shame along with it: But then they should ask agreeably to the rules of the gospel, under the limitation of proper terms, with decency and humility; since he who is asked should be *solicited*, but not *forced*. The *mercies* of God may be considered; but then his *justice* should also be remember'd; since, as it is written on one hand, *I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me*: So it is likewise written on the other, *Whoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father, and before his angels*. For how indulgent soever the *compassions* of God may represent him, yet his *holiness* assures us, that he will not dispence with our obedience; and as he invites us to his feast; so they who shall come *without a wedding garment*, will be *bound hand and foot*, and *cast out* of the assembly of his saints. He hath prepared, indeed, an *heaven*; but then he hath prepared an *hell* too. He hath provided, it is confessed, a place of *refreshments*; but then he hath also provided a place of *eternal punishments*. He is master of a *light* which no man can approach; and of a *darkness* also, which hath unspeakable and endless horrors. Upon the whole, we have been desirous all along of keeping as much as we could within a middle temper; and have debated this matter among good numbers of

Matt. 18. 32.

Matt. 10. 33.

Luke 12. 9.

Matt. 22. 12.

13.

As well as they who have fallen into the calamities. The Roman clergy are here bespeaking those who had not been tried in this persecution, as well as those who had been tried in it, and come off conquerors. It now was in its wain, especially at Rome; so that they in that place, whom it had not yet taken hold of, seemed to have escaped it.

our

our own clergy; and of such bishops as were driven hither from several distant fees, by the rage of this persecution; and have agreed to enter upon no new measures in this affair, till we have a bishop set over us; mean while to compound with the lapsed in the following manner, *viz.* For those of them whose case will bear delay till it shall please God to give us a bishop, we have determined to post-pone it; but as for those, who are in near and extreme danger of death, and so can admit of no such procrastinations; if they submit to the performance of penance, and profess once and again an hearty abhorrence of their sins; if by tears, and groans, and lamentations, they give proper evidences of a penitent and contrite spirit; (in these circumstances) we have concluded to step into their assistance with all due reserve and caution; since God alone knows how he will deal with people in their condition, and what sentence shall finally be allotted them; *our* part, we thought, was to be careful, that wicked men should not be induced to extol our too great indulgence; nor real penitents to accuse us of any unnecessary cruelty or rigour. Most blessed and glorious pope, we heartily wish your welfare, in the Lord, and beg your remembrance of us.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXX.

¶ *Performance of their penance.* They then undertook it; and if they lived, were to go through it; if they died, the hope of them was very dubious. The *opus operatum*, the ministration of the priest was not then esteemed judicial, nor conclusive; so *Ambrose* in his exhortation to penance, saith of this clinical penance, that he could, indeed, assign it, but could not undertake for the success of it.



EPISTLE XXXI.

Epistle XXXI.

Was written by the Roman confessors to our author, and sent by the same bearers, Saturnus and Optatus, with the preceding letter. The reason of these letters coming so late, after so much had been done in the case of the lapsed, before the writing them, was; that the Roman clergy consulted (as they tell our author in the 30th epistle) with divers bishops, as well as in a large body of their own upon it, before they would deliver their sentiments concerning it: With these two letters were enclosed the dispatches, which the clergy of Rome sent to Sicily upon this occasion; but the copy of those dispatches is not now extant; only we may guess at the tenour of them from these which yet remain to us.

Written during our author's retirement, and the vacancy of the Roman see.

Moyles and Maximus, presbyters; and Nicostratus, and Rufinus, deacons; and the other confessors, who are with them, to pope CYPRIAN, send greeting.



Midst the manifold sorrows, brother, which surround us, upon the dreadful ravages made by the present persecution, almost all the world over; we have had great support and comfort from your letters, which have been instead of cordials and restoratives to our drooping spirits. Hence we have imprinted upon our minds a just sense of the favourable dealings of providence towards us, whose design, perhaps, it was in suffering us to continue thus long under the bondage of our present imprisonment, that thro' the power of your instructions and persuasives, our courage might so much the more be animated, and our resolutions fixed, and our desires

§. 1.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXXI.

fires become the more ardent for pressing forwards to the crown reserved for us. Your letter darted in such light upon us, as the sun does, when it breaks thro' a cloudy tempestuous horizon; restored such ease to us, as a calm doth to mariners, after a stormy season; was as comfortable to us, as rest after labour, as health after a dangerous sickness, or as the return of day after a dark and tedious night: Just so we received it with eager joy, and satisfied our earnest longings by reading it with equal pleasure; infomuch that we feel our selves fresh and vigorous, and well prepared for the encounter of the enemy. Our Lord, no doubt, will requite you for this your charity, and will pay you ample wages for so good a work: Since he is indeed little less entitled to the honour of the martyr's crown, whose exhortations carry others to it; than those others are, who, themselves, press forwards to it: The praise of the instructor, is in this case equal, to that of the person, who hath acted in pursuance of such instructions; and the director, here, stands as much commended, as he who actually enters the lists; with this only difference between them; that in many cases the *master* is entitled to a greater share of glory, than the person who only approves himself a docible *scholar*. The one, perhaps, had never attained the proficiency he is grown to, but for the assistances he derived from the other. We repeat it therefore again, brother *Cyprian*, that we received great refreshment, consolation and pleasure, from the praises so justly given by you, we say not, to the illustrious *death* of the martyrs, but, to their *manner* of entring upon *life* and *immortality*; such *ends* as theirs should so be celebrated; nor can a just account be given of them, but by such a pen as yours. Accordingly, your letter hath given us an exact idea of the noble triumphs of the martyrs; we were enabled by it to form as clear a view of their glorious ascent to heaven, as if our eyes had beheld it; and to represent them to our selves as seated amidst angels, authorities, and other heavenly powers; and we even imagined our selves hearing the testimony vouchsafed them by our Lord before his Father. This it is which adds a daily increase to our courage, and excites us to the pursuit of so great an honour.

§. 2.
That martyr-
dom is not to
be considered
as a punish-
ment, but an
honour.

2. For what greater happiness or honour can the gracious providence of God vouchsafe to any man, than the opportunity of confessing his Lord God without fear or flinching, in the hands of his tormentors? And; when the secular powers have tried all their malice on him, and mangled his body with the most exquisite instruments of savage cruelty; then, with a free, tho' a fleeing spirit, to acknowledge Christ the Son of God? To exchange, by these means, earth for heaven; and the society of men, for the fellowship of angels? To break through all the enclosures, clogs and impediments of this world, and, in spite of them all, to present himself clearly disengaged from them, before the presence of his God? To gain possession of the kingdom of heaven, without the least delay or interruption? To become an associate and colleague with Christ in his sufferings, by enduring them for his sake? To be raised to the honour of a judge, by the peculiar vouchsafement of his Judge? To come off with a pure and untainted conscience, after having been brought to the confession of Christ's name? To have withstood those irreligious laws of men, which were made against the gospel? To have born a publick testimony to the truth? To have conquered that death by dying, which is the common object of all mens fear? To have gained life and im-

[The *efficiency*.] This was a reference to *Mat. 10. 32. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father, which is in heaven.* [Without the least delay.] That this was the confessed privilege of martyrs, see note on §. 12. of the *exhortation to martyrdom*. [Partake with Christ immediately] with the passages there referred to. [Raised to the honour of a judge.] The martyrs (it was supposed) would be assessors with Christ the Judge, in his judgment of the world; and so the sense is clear enough: But whether this be the proper importance of the words [*Judicis sui divina dignatione judicem factum fuisse*] let the learned reader determine. [Laws of men.] These were such edicts of the Roman Emperors, as inhibited the profession of the gospel, and all assemblies for the worship of God thro' Christ.

mortality

mortality by death it self? To have overcome the force of the most exquisite torments, by a superior force and courage in bearing them? To have struggled successfully with all bodily pains and pressures, by the firmness and vigour of his spirit? To have looked, without emotion or horror, upon the blood flowing from his wounds? * To have grown even fond of punishment, after having once embraced the faith of Christ? And to think it a loss of life, not to depart out of it? Our Lord in his gospel hath sounded, as it were, a charge to this battel, by saying; *He that loveth father, or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* And again; *Blessed are they, who are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall hate and persecute you; rejoice (then) and be exceeding glad; for so their fathers persecuted the prophets, which were before you.* And again; *Ye shall stand before governors and Kings; -- and the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; -- and he that endureth unto the end shall be saved.* And; *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down upon the throne of my Father.* Once more the apostle hath put the question to our purpose; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written; For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.) But in all these things we are more than conquerors, for his sake who loved us.*

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXXI.

Matt. 10. 37
38.

Matt. 5. 10,
11, 12.

Luke 6. 22, 23.

Matt. 10. 18,
21, 22.

Revel. 3. 21.

Rom. 8. 35,
36, 37.

§. 3.
That the words of the gospel are great encouragements to animate the christian's faith.

3. When we read and compare these things together from the book of God, and feel his word ministring, as it were, the fuel to our faith; we are so far from fearing the enemies of truth, that we even challenge them; and by not yielding to the adversaries of our Lord, we are sure to conquer them, with all their impious laws which they have made against *that* and *him*. And though we have not yet shed our blood in this cause; yet we hold our selves in a constant readiness to do it; and let no man, mean while, impute it to any effects of our adversaries clemency, that we are hitherto put back from shedding it, which is indeed an hindrance and misfortune to us; as stopping the honour we are in quest of; as delaying our entrance upon heaven, and the presence of our God. For in encounters of this nature, where faith contends for its proper prize; the truest clemency to martyrs, is not to postpone nor hinder them in their course. Wherefore, dear *Cyprian*, do you beg of our Lord, that he would daily fortify us all, by his grace, and strengthen us yet more and more with his might and power; that, like a glorious commander, he would draw forth us his soldiers into the *field of battel*, whom hitherto he hath only trained up and exercised within the *camp of our imprisonment*; that he would lend us his invincible armour, the breast-plate of righteousness, which cannot be battered; the shield of faith which cannot be pierced through; and the sword of the Spirit, whose edge will never turn. And indeed *whose* intercessions should we rather bespeak for these several purposes, than such an illustrious bishop's? Or *whose* assistance can be more proper than a *priest's*, to persons already marked out for *sacrifices*?

4. We have likewise another occasion started, of satisfaction and pleasure to us, from your diligent attendance upon the duties of your episcopal function, (notwithstanding that the iniquity of the times hath separated you from your flock for a certain season;) from the frequent encouragements which you have given by your letters to the confessors of the church; from your great

§. 4.
In the case of the lapsed they agree with St. Cyprian.

* To have grown even fond, &c.] *Quam supplicia sua post fidem amare cepisse?* Are the words; which I leave to the judgment of the learned reader.

† *Their fathers.*] Our author (citing, very probably, this passage by memory) hath made it up from the two evangelists referred to in the margin.

‡ *A priest's.*] As the relation between priest and sacrifice is obvious; so will the allusion be to the reader.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXXI.

Matt. 7. 6.

81. 11. 11. 11.

75. 3. 11. 11.

228. 2. 11. 11.

75. 10.

8. 8.

81. 11. 11. 11.

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care in supplying, out of your own proper stock, all necessary expenses; from your being^b virtually present, upon all exigencies, with your people; and from your deserting no part of the duty incumbent on you; nor halting, nor flinching from it: We cannot, however, forbear to express our most particular satisfaction, nor, with it, to add our eulogies of your conduct; in the just rebukes you gave to those offenders, who forgetting the heinousness of their sins, had too hastily extorted the peace of the church, from some of your presbyters in your absence, quite out of course and rule; as likewise to those presbyters themselves; who, without any regard to the tenour of the gospel-directions, and with too little respect to the dignity of their holy religion, had tamely given the Holy of the Lord to dogs, and cast his pearls before swine: Whereas so foul an offence, which had spread it self with such infinite desolation almost throughout the world, should have been treated with all the deliberation and care imaginable; the whole body of bishops, presbyters, deacons, confessors, and even^k those of the laity who had kept their ground, and had not fallen away in the time of persecution, should have been consulted in it, as you in your letters have declared your sentiments: And indeed otherwise, whilst we are too officious in stopping one old breach; we shall be in danger of making twenty new ones: For what is become of God's word, when we are thus forward and easy in granting pardon to offenders? We agree they should be tenderly and gently handled, and so be trained up to the^l just season of forgiveness; but then they should be instructed likewise out of the holy scriptures, how great and grievous their sin is, ^m above all other offences, which they could have committed. Nor let them flatter themselves, as if their numbers would screen them; but rather from that consideration, let the stricter hand be held over them: Boasting of numbers hath not hitherto been considered as any extenuation of the crime committed; but a modest diffidence, a patient submission to discipline, a meek and humble behaviour; the staying to hear what the opinion of others is, and the bearing it when it differs from their own; (these) are the circumstances fittest to soften guilt, to approve the sincerity of their repentance, to finish the cure of the wound they have received in this fatal encounter, to raise and exhilarate their drooping spirits; and in short, to repel and stop the foul and noisom exhalations arising from their sin. A good physician will not allow the same diet to his sick patients, which may safely be permitted to those who are in health; lest such improper food should enflame the rage of the distemper, which he is called to mitigate; and what might have been starved by abstinence, should be prolonged and heightened by the crudities of a surcharged stomach.

§. 5.
That the lapsed should expect no restoration without penance.

5. The hands, therefore, which have been polluted with impious sacrifices, should be washed and cleansed from them by a tenour of good works; and the wretched mouths which have been defiled with execrable meats; should be

^a *virtually present.*] i. e. There was nothing of moment passed, but what he took care of by letters, directions, assistances, encouragements, &c. though the iniquity of the times had removed his bodily presence, or local residence from his people.

^b *The holy of the Lord.*] This I have literally translated. *Sanctum domini*, are our author's words; in which *sanctus*, or body, is understood; whereby were evidently meant the eucharistical elements.

^c *Those of the laity.*] They mention here bishops, presbyters, deacons; *these*, of the clergy; (the lower offices of subdeacon, lector, &c. being not at all considered in matters of Government) next the *confessors*, who were sometimes, as it happened, *clergy*, and sometimes *lay-men*; but had a distinct regard paid to their sentiments upon this question, as being the persons, of all others, most offended by the lapse of weak brethren; and last of all, the *sanctes laici*, the *faithful*, or such of the laity as had not fallen. For whose agency in this matter see note [without taking your advice, &c.] in ep. 14. §. 3. and note [without the concurrence of your sentiments] in ep. 17.

^d *Just season of forgiveness.*] This season was, when they had gone through a legitimate course of penance.

^e *Above all other offences.*] The sins committed more immediately against God, (it hath already been observed) were accounted of the deepest dye; and such was the sin of these lapsed, *viz.* idolatry and apostasy.

purified

PART II.

purified with the ^a words of a sincere repentance: The soul of such an one should be sanctified, and cultivated afresh, even in its innermost retirements; the groans of a true penitent should be heard from far; and the ^o religious tears which flow from his eyes, should once more speak him cordial in the interests of the gospel; those very eyes which had looked with guilt upon heathen idols, should be made instrumental in appeasing the wrath of God by their weeping and lamentation. In distempers there is nothing more necessary than patience; they who labour under them, must for some time be content to struggle with them, and to wait for their recovery, till by bearing a great deal they have conquered their malady. The cure is very fallacious when the surgeon makes too much haste in skinning over a wound; every little accident opens it afresh, if it hath not had time for a perfect and lasting cure. If a fire be not thoroughly quenched, and all the sparks of it quite put out; we know it will easily be re-kindled: In like manner, ^p these men should be sensible, that the delay of their forgiveness is designed for their advantage; and that the remedies applied to them, are thence the more likely to become effectual. Who will henceforwards *confess* Christ, at the expence of a close and noisom imprisonment; if they who have *denied* him, shall not be thought to have endangered the shipwreck of their faith? ^q Who will, henceforwards, submit to bonds and fetters for the name of God; if they who have departed from the confession of it, are not, for some time, excluded from communion? Where shall we find martyrs to lay down their glorious lives in the cause of the gospel; if they who have flinched from it be not brought to a just sense of their great transgression? If they pretend that they cannot bear delay, and persist in their troublesome importunities to be forthwith restored; it will be in vain for them to scatter about their invidious and foul reproaches and complaints, which will never be able to stand against the power of truth; they might, if they had pleased, have preserved their *own* right to that communion, which now they find themselves obliged to ask of *others*, under the colour of necessity; though they reduced themselves to that *necessity* by their own *choice*: ^r Since the faith, which should have enabled them to confess Christ, might have been preserved ^s by Christ in communion with him. We always, brother, wish your welfare, and beg your remembrance of us.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XXXI.

^a Words of a sincere repentance.] *Pœnitentia vera sermonibus.* This, I suppose, means such a sort of conversation, as becomes a penitent; or perhaps may allude to the words used for and by penitents in religious offices.

^o Religious tears, &c. should once more speak him.] Some copies read it *not only once, but again, or often.* I have given the passage the turn which Bp. Fell conjectures might be meant by it, as alluding to those mournful rites, whereof the idolatrous worship of the heathens did very much consist. As he had before mourned in these solemnities *unlawfully*, the penitent is here directed to mourn *religiously*, and to turn his *ungodly* into a godly sorrow.

^p These men.] *Viz.* the lapsed.

^q Who will henceforwards, &c.] This manner of expostulating, proves one great design of the penitential discipline to have been *exemplary*; as also the reason why such a particular regard was had to confessors, in determining the whole question upon the *case of the lapsed*.

^r Since the faith, &c.] The meaning is; that they might have confessed the name of Christ (which is a sarcasm upon their denying it) and then they might have retained in their own right, that title to communion, which now they had brought themselves under a necessity of asking from others.

^s By Christ.] *Viz.* By such measures of his Spirit as they might have had for asking, and by endeavouring to act conformably thereunto.

A. D. 250.
Epist. XXXII.



EPISTLE XXXII.

Written in his
retirement.

Was written by our author to his clergy, in the month of September, A. D. 250, upon occasion of the foregoing ones; to notify to them the transactions and occurrences they relate to; as likewise to take care by their means, that other bishops, who happened to be at Carthage, might have copies of them, and thence know how to regulate their own conduct, in concurrence with our prelate's.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons sendeth greeting.



Have herewith sent you, dear brethren, copies of the letter, which I wrote to the clergy of *Rome*, and of the answer they returned me; as likewise of the answer, made me by the presbyters *Moses* and *Maximus*, and the deacons *Nicostratus* and *Rufinus*, and the other confessors imprisoned with them; that you might thence have a clear view of what hath passed between us. Do you, for your parts, take what care you can, that both my letters and their answers be communicated to our brethren. Let such likewise of my colleagues the bishops, as shall resort to *Carthage* from any distant sees, or any presbyters or deacons of other churches, who shall happen to be amongst you, be made acquainted with them; and if they desire copies to carry home with them, let them have the liberty of transcribing. Although, indeed, I have already given this direction to my reader, *Saturus*, that if any have a mind to transcribe these several letters, he should permit them to do it; that so in our settling the affairs of the church, we may all observe one rule of proceeding. For the rest; as I have written to diverse of my colleagues; whatsoever farther remains undetermined, I have resolved to debate it in a full council with you, when it shall please God to give us the opportunity of meeting. My dear, and much wanted brethren, I always wish your welfare; and desire you to salute our brethren from me. Farewel.

* From any distant sees.] At the capital city of the province, there was always business depending, either secular or ecclesiastical, which brought the clergy from all parts to it. And this was the foundation of that eminent respect which was paid to the bishop of the metropolis. In process of time, canons were made to regulate this resort, when it grew excessive, and was become a matter of ambition; and to confine the bishops to residence. What *Rigaltius* hath here observed upon the word *peregrinus*, (or stranger) is foreign to the point, and had no relation to that *communio peregrina*, which was a kind of conditional communion with those strangers, of whom it was not known, whether they were, or not, in communion with their proper bishop. N. B. Every bishop in communion with the catholic church, was allowed to offer, or to consecrate in the church, to which he resorted thus occasionally.

EPISTLE

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXIII.

EPISTLE XXXIII.

Was written in answer to a letter he had received from certain lapsed members of his church, wherein they were undecently importunate with him for a restoration to communion; he had received another of a more modest tenour from persons in the same condition; but to this, which was more rough and peremptory, he immediately returned the following answer, in the same year and month with the preceding epistle. *Written in his retirement.*

CYPRIAN ^a to the lapsed.

WHEN our Lord, whose precepts we ought to follow, was settling the honours of his bishop, and the regimen of his church; we find him speaking thus ^b to Peter in his gospel, and saying; *I say* *Matt. 16. 18;*
unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build ^{19.}
my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. From thence, in a ^c regular succession downwards, we date the ordination of bishops, and the course of ecclesiastical administrations, so as that we understand the church to be settled upon her bishops; and every publick act of hers to be regulated and managed by them. Wherefore since this establishment is ^d founded upon the divine law; I cannot but wonder at the boldness and insolence of certain persons, who have taken upon them to write to me, as in the name of the whole church; whereas the ^e church is really made up of her bishop and clergy, and those of her laity, who have not fallen. Far be it from us to allow that the ^f power and mercy of God should any where be so invidiously represented, as by confining the church, to the number of the lapsed; especially since we find it written; *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* *Matt. 22. 32.* We wish indeed most heartily, that all may be *enlivened*; and we pray with tears, and sorrow of heart, that they may be restored to their former condition. But if some of the lapsed will take upon themselves to constitute the church,

^a To the lapsed.] The very inscription here, without any greeting, would speak our author's resentment, if we were sure of the authority of these titles.

^b To Peter.] What is here cited of St. Peter, is evidently applied by our author to the case of bishops in general. See note [saying to Peter] in §. 3. of the *unity of the church*.

^c Regular succession.] In our author's time, that succession was well known; and Tertullian, in b. 4. c. 5. against Marcion, mentions the churches particularly which were founded by St. John, and saith, "That if the succession of their bishops was reckoned backwards, the order of them would go as high as to St. John, the first of them." And Demas, in b. 3. c. 3. saith the same at large of the churches founded by other apostles, "That by reckoning backwards, they could recur to the very apostles themselves, whose proper successors the bishops were, who lived in his time." In later ages it is agreed, that this succession was not (as indeed considering the principles and practices then prevailing, it was morally impossible that the succession should be) altered.

^d Founded upon the divine law.] We see here that the divine institution of episcopacy, is no novel notion; and that every act of the church must have the bishop's authority to confirm it, tho' he might advise about it with his clergy and people.

^e Church is really made up.] Tho' the christian church was originally founded upon bishops; yet what completed and finished any particular church was a bishop, (in the singular number,) a clergy, (in the plural,) and those laymen, who had not forfeited their privilege of church-communion by any heinous sin; which, by the way, was a reproof of these lapsed, who had forfeited that privilege by their fall.

^f Power and mercy.] Upon both which attributes it would have been a gross and grievous imputation to have suggested, that he had preserved none but the lapsed in a state of communion with him.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXIII.

and ^s will insist that the church is *with* them, and *in* them; what remains, but that *we* should become *their* supplicants, and that we should beseech them to vouchsafe us the honour and the privilege of communion? Wherefore it becomes *them* to be modest, peaceable, and submissive; who ought to remember their grievous sin, and to think how they may reconcile themselves to God after it; and not to take upon them the writing letters in the name of the church, when they should rather consider that they are ^h writing *to* it.

§. 2.
All the lapsed were not tainted with this insolent humour of demanding the peace of the church so irregularly.

Luke 17. 10.

2. ⁱ Some, however, of the lapsed, who have also written to me upon this subject, have behaved themselves with more meekness and modesty, as fearing God, and trembling at his word; and have all along, since their lapse, been eminent for their good works, which yet they have ascribed to the grace of our Lord, as remembering what he hath said in his gospel; *When ye shall have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* These things they have duly considered, and accordingly, though they have got commendatory letters from the martyrs, yet, that their penance might be acceptable in the sight of God, they have written, moreover, to me; assuring me, that they are truly sensible of their sin, and do submit to penance for it, and are not for rushing too hastily upon communion; but are content to wait for my coming amongst them, alledging, that even communion it self will be the more welcome to them, for receiving it at my hands. The Lord is my witness, how much I congratulate with them this regular and christian conduct; who hath been pleased also ^k to reveal to me, how highly acceptable it is in his sight. This letter from them I have just now received; and since I find you writing after a different manner; I beseech you to consider well the subject *matter* of your desires, as well as the *manner* wherein you send to me; and whosoever you are who have so written to me, I must intreat you to ^l subscribe your names to your paper, and dispatch it hither to me when so subscribed: For I ought first to know the persons whom I am to answer; and then I will send you such an answer as may become my place and station, and the methods of my regimen. My dear brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, and intreat you to behave your selves peaceably and quietly, according to the rules of our Lord's discipline. Farewel.

^s Will insist.] The lapsed to whom he now writes, had sent him a letter (not now extant) wherein they had thus insisted.

^h Writing to it.] They had forfeited their privilege of being of it, by lapsing; and when they sued for a restoration, they sued for it not as members of it, but as supplicants to it.

ⁱ Some, however, of the lapsed.] This refers to another letter from the lapsed, written in a better strain than that which our author now answers; but neither is this, nor the other, extant.

^k To reveal to me.] By dream, or vision, (saith Rigaltius) see note [*vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure*] in epist. 7.

^l Subscribe your names.] They had taken, it seems, upon them to write in general, as the church; which our author hath remarked upon them in the preceding §. Here, therefore, he tells them, they should write, as private persons, and subscribe their names; that when he knew their persons, he might the better judge of the reasonableness of their request.



A. D. 250;
Ep. XXXIV.



EPISTLE XXXIV.

About the same time with the preceding transaction, one Gaius, a presbyter, ^{Written in his} with his deacon, had been prevailed upon to communicate with the lap- ^{retirement.} sed; and would not desist upon admonition given them by the bishops, who then happened to be at Carthage, to forbear: Whereupon the clergy of Carthage, by advice of the said bishops, refused to communicate with Gaius and his deacon; and St. Cyprian hearing of it approves their conduct, and makes it a rule for the future; which he signifies to them in this epistle.

CYPRIAN to his brethren, the presbyters and deacons, sendeth greeting.

YOU have done very well, my dear brethren, and agreeably to the rules of discipline, in pursuing the advice of my colleagues, who are with you, and in determining not to communicate with Gaius, ^{§. 1.} presbyter of Didda, nor with ^b his deacon; who, though they were more than once proved to have communicated with the lapsed, and to have ^c offered their oblations; and, as you have written to me, were often admonished by my colleagues with you, to forbear such an irregular practice; yet, have obstinately persisted in their presumption, and have misled divers of our people into their error; whose interests I have much at heart, and would with all sollicitude consult, not by methods of colloque and flattery, but by a sincere adherence to the rules of the gospel; and therefore I would have them implore the mercies of God with a true and hearty repentance, as well as with all the external tokens of penitential sorrow; inasmuch as we find it written, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent.* ^{Revel. 2. 5.} And again the holy scripture saith; *When thou shalt be converted, and mourn,* ^{Isai. 30. 15.} *thou shalt be saved, and shalt know where thou hast been.* But how should they mourn, or submit to a regular penance, when some of our presbyters wipe away their tears, and intercept the course of their lamentations, by judging them fit to be admitted immediately to communion? Forgetting what is written; *They ^e who applaud thee, cause thee to err; they disturb the way* ^{Isai. 3. 12.} *of thy paths.* It is no wonder, that our wholsom directions, which carry so much truth, have so little weight with them; whilst truth is obscured by mere

^a Presbyter of Didda.] Gaius Diddensi presbytero. I follow here the conjecture of Pamelius, who supposes Didda to be a village near Carthage, and Gaius to have been the presbyter assigned to it: But as the word no where else occurs, the reader is to be admonished, that this is only a conjecture.

^b His deacon.] Observe hence, that each presbyter, or each, at least, who was assigned to a particular cure, had his deacon to attend him in holy offices.

^c Offered their oblations.] See note [celebrate the holy eucharist] in ep. 5. and note [make oblations for the lapsed] in ep. 15.

^d Isai. 30. 15.] The LXX read this passage as our author doth, who took it from them; so do the Arabic and Syriac versions, and the Chaldean paraphrast gives it much the same turn; but our English follows the Hebrew more literally.

^e Who applaud thee.] Felicitate, or call thee happy; so the Hebrew, the LXX, the vulgar Latin; and the Chaldean paraphrast read it with our author: But the Arabic version reads it as our English; *they who lead thee, or are over thee; and the Syriac hath it, thy benefactors.*

flattering

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXIV.

flattering and pleasing propofals; and thus their diftempered *minds* are alike affected, as diftempered *bodies* are apt to be; which usually naufcate wholefom and proper food, and relifh nothing, but whar is sweet and agreeable for the prefent, to their corrupted palare; and fo not hearkning to fober counfel, they make their diftemper fatal to them; and no medicine will fuccéed with them, whilft they indulge the deceitful pleasures of their fickly tafte. Do you, however, as by letters I have exhorted you, perfevere in your meafures, which are fo well calculated for the edification and profit of the perfons concerned in them; and read thofe letters to fuch of my colleagues as are with you, or as fhall happen to come amongst you; that fo we may proceed with unanimity and concert, in the cure of our lapsed brethren; whose cafe we will more at large confider, when it fhall pleafe God to favour us with the opportunity of meeting together. Mean while, if any are rash and importunate, be they any of our prefbyters, or deacons, or any ftrangers, who fhall come amongst you, and will needs communicate with the lapsed, before I have decided the cafe; let fuch be prohibited from all communion with us; and ftand obliged to plead their caufe before us all, when God fhall permit us to meet together; and to remain for the interim in a ftate of cenfure for their prefumption.

§. 2.
A question
what was to
be done in the
case of thofe
who had de-
serted their
cures in the
time of dan-
ger.

2. You have likewise defired my opinion, upon the cafe of the fubdeacons, *Philumenus* and *Fortunatus*, and the waiter *Favorinus*, who quitted their pofts, and retired, in the middle of the perfecution, and are now returned to their refpective charges: Now this is a cafe, which I can by no means undertake to determine fingly; fince very many of our clergy have thus abfented themfelves, and have not even yet, tho' fo late, refumed their trusts; and the particular cafes which you mention fhould have, I think, a more diftinct confideration, not only with my colleagues, but with all my people; for a cafe which is to be a precedent for the future, and in which the minifters of the church are fo nearly concerned, fhould be * maturely confidered before it be finally determined. In the mean while, let them be † fufpended from their monthly dividend; not that they fhould be underftood thereby to be deprived of their miniftry; but only, that every thing fhould be referved entire till my return. My dear brethren, I always wifh your welfare. Salute our brethron from me. Farewel.

* *Maturely confidered.*] Our author was, himfelf, a little concerned in this cafe, as having retired from his charge; fo he would not determine in a cafe fo like his own, when he referred others, in which he might be fupposed lefs partial, to the judgment of his clergy and people, in conjunction with himfelf. Yet after all, his circumftances were not perfectly the fame; for, befides the revelation he had for retiring, he was (as the 8th epiftle calls him) a *distinguished person*, and thence the more likely to enflame the rage of the perfecution, as well as to increafe his own perfonal danger.

† *Sufpended from their monthly dividend.*] It hath heretofore been obferved from our author, that the revenues of the church confifted at the beginning of the oblations of the faithful, which were divided into four parts; one of which was affigned to the bifhop, and one to his clergy. (See note [whole fum] in epift. 5.) So that the bifhop's fhare equalled that of all his clergy together. The divifion, it fhould feem hence, was made once in a month; and the fufpending thefe prefbyters from it *pro interim*, was a provisional method; if they fhould be acquitted, there was no great harm done to them; fince their quota might in that cafe be referved for them, and come in all at once; if, upon a difcuffion of their cafe; they were to be cenfured, then their punifhment feems to have been what now we call *fufpenfion à beneficio*. I take no notice here of *Rigaltius's* criticism upon *Pamalius*, fince, I fuppofe, the meaning very clear, as here reprefented.



A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXV.

EPISTLE XXXV.

In the month of October (the same year) our author wrote this letter to the clergy of Rome, acquainting them with the preceding transactions; agreeably to that brotherly correspondence, which was then maintained between the several districts of the christian church.

Written in his retirement; and in the vacancy of the Roman see.

CYPRIAN to his brethren the presbyters and deacons, dwelling at Rome, sendeth greeting.



It is very suitable, my dear brethren, to that mutual affection, and to those common measures taken by us for the government of the church, that all occurrences of moment here, should be communicated to you; that so we may proceed in the same methods of administration, for the common advantage of the church: Now just after I had written to you, and sent my letter by our brethren, *Saturus* the reader, and *Optatus* the subdeacon, concerning the deliberate presumption of certain persons, who decline all submissions to penance, and will not so much as endeavour to appease the wrath of God: they, themselves, wrote to me upon this subject; not so much demanding, that the peace of the church should be given them, as insisting, that it was already given; and this, under a pretence that *Paulus* had given it without exception to them all; as you will see from their letters, whereof I have here sent you copies; as I have likewise done, of my short answer to them for the present, and of the letter I afterwards writ to my clergy upon this occasion, that you might hence have a clear view of the whole affair. And now if your letters do not check their presumption, and they will not hearken to wholesome counsel; I shall take such farther courses with them, as our Lord in his gospel hath directed. My dear brethren, I heartily, and always, wish your welfare.

• *Paulus.*] See this pretension more at large deduced in the answer of *Lucian* to *Celerinus*, epist. 22.
• *Our Lord in his gospel.*] Viz. in *Matt.* 18. 17. To tell it to the church, and to repute them as *heathens and publicans* who should neglect to hear the church. Bishop Fell.



A. D. 256.
Ep. XXXVI.



EPISTLE XXXVI.

Written in
our author's
retirement,
and in the
vacancy of the
Roman see.

Was written by the Roman clergy in answer to the foregoing letter; to condemn the presumption of the lapsed, and to tell our author that he had nothing to fear from the heretick Privatus, since they had already rejected him. This was written towards the end of the same October.

The presbyters and deacons, dwelling at Rome, to pope CYPRIAN send greeting.

§. 1.



PON reading the packet you sent us by *Fortunatus*, your sub-deacon, we found from it, brother, that we had two things to lament and condole with you; *one*, that in the midst of so severe a persecution, when you have so much other trouble upon your hands, you should have no rest allowed you by your own people; the *other*, that the lapsed had proceeded to such great indecencies of speech and behaviour, in the bold demands they have made upon you. But though these circumstances, which we have mentioned, have proved exceedingly afflictive to us; yet the weight of this sorrow was very much lightened, by your steadiness and courage in adhering firmly to the discipline of the gospel; and by the prudent course you took for checking their presumption, and at the same time for pointing to them the proper way of salvation, through a course of penitential labours, to which you exhorted them. Indeed we cannot sufficiently express our astonishment at their rash and hasty procedure; that when the season was so improper and unripe for it; when their crime was so great, and their apostasy so scandalous; they should press so hard upon you for the peace of the church, not by way of humble intreaty, but of peremptory claim, and as insisting, that their pardon was already sealed in heaven.

§. 2.

That the indulgence granted to the lapsed should be governed by the rules of the gospel.

2. Now if it be really so; what need is there they should ask what they already have? Or if their asking be a confessed proof of their not having it; why will they not wait for the sentence of those, from whom they think fit to solicit that peace, which they acknowledge they have not? Or if they imagine, that they can *elsewhere* derive the privilege of communion; let them try it by gospel-rules; and if it agrees therewith; then, and not otherwise, let it be esteemed available. But how is it possible that *christian communion* should be granted by methods which seem to cross diametrically upon the *christian law*? For since *no prerogative* can any otherwise give an *indulgence*, than as it agreeth

* *What need, &c. they should ask.* If they had the peace and pardon of God, they needed not to have asked it of Men; but the one was judged, in our author's time, necessary to the other: And they who would not endeavour to reconcile themselves to the church, were esteemed as aliens from the covenant of promise, and divested of all title to the kingdom of heaven.

^b *Elsewhere derive.* Vix. Not from the bishop, clergy, and people; but from the confessors or martyrs.

^c *No prerogative.* For the importance and meaning of that word, as a law-term, see note [their peculiar privilege] in epist. 18. The explication of the passage is not difficult; the dispensation or indulgence here mentioned, and contended for by the lapsed, was the relaxation of their penance, and the being admitted to communion without going through it. The prerogative of granting it, was claimed by the martyrs; but our author, with the Roman clergy, insisted that they could exercise no such prerogative against the rules of the gospel; and that the lapsed could take no advantage from it, except they conformed in all points to the law of that God with whom they sought a reconciliation.

with the will of him, with whom the association or communion gained by it is desired; the man who conforms not to the will of God, with whom he seeks to be associated, must needs be understood to forfeit the privilege of such association, whereunto the indulgence would otherwise entitle him. Let them therefore observe the tendencies of their conduct in this affair; for if the Gospel teacheth one thing, and the martyrs will take upon them to determine another; both of them will run a great risque by thus clashing with each other. On the one hand, the dignity of the gospel will be exceedingly depreiated; if it may be overborn by any novel determination; and on the other hand, the crown, to which their gallant confession entitled them, will fall off from the martyrs heads; if it shall appear that they gained it any otherwise than as the gospel directs, which ^d makes them martyrs: So that in truth, it is incumbent upon none to be more careful, that they determine nothing against the rules of the gospel, than upon such as have taken the pains to earn the name of martyrs. We would gladly upon this occasion be informed, whether the martyrs became such or any other reason, than because they were determined to retain for themselves the privilege of communion, by refusing to join in the heathen sacrifices, even at the expence of their blood; as knowing well, that if they had yielded to the force of the torture, and had been thereby induced to sacrifice; they must have lost the peace of the church, and with it their title to salvation: And with what consistency can they then contend, that the peace of the church should be granted to such as have sacrificed; since the rule by which they proceeded, should equally hold in the case of others?

3. In the course of this affair we cannot but observe, moreover, that their conduct arraigns and condemns it self; for if the martyrs thought that peace was to be granted to the lapsed; wherefore did they not grant it themselves? Why did they send them, as they say themselves, to the bishop for it? For he who can authoritatively order any thing to be done, may do the thing himself, if he pleases, which he so orders to be done by another. But indeed we easily apprehend, and the thing really speaks it self, that the holy martyrs chose this middle course, from a just regard, as well to the truth and fitness of things, as to their own modesty. For thus when they were hard pressed by numbers, and those numbers sent them to the bishop; they eased themselves of the difficulty which would have attended their resisting such importunity and solicitation; and then, by not communicating with the lapsed, whilst their case was thus depending, the martyrs preserved the purity of the gospel-rules inviolate. Do you, however, for your part, brother, persist in your charitable endeavours, to quiet the minds of the lapsed, and to apply proper remedies to the case of those who have deviated from the truth; and be not discouraged, if such as are sick and crazy, do not immediately acknowledge the kindness and diligence of such as attend their cure. The wound which the lapsed have received is still fresh, and the swelling of it not yet abated; and therefore we have very good hope, that their present impatience will wear off with time; and then they will be thankful that they have been kept in hand for a season, till their cure could be depended on: We mean, if there be no officious persons, to arm them against their own interest and safety; and who, by wrong suggestions to them, instead of those wholsom remedies where-with a due delay would furnish them, would instil into them the deadly poison of an over-hasty restoration.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXVI.

§. 3.

That was an argument the peace which was granted by these confessors was matter of favour, because they sent the lapsed to the bishops for it.

^d Makes them martyrs.] Our fathers in the epistle to the clergy of Rome, No 27. had said, That martyrs do not make the gospel, but the gospel makes martyrs; here they repeat his words with approbation.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXVII.

EPISTLE XXXVII.

In the month of November, Celerinus the confessor (writer of the letter to Lucian, N^o. 21.) came from Rome to Carthage, and acquainted our author, in his retirement, with the kind dispositions of Moyſes, and the other confessors there to him; upon which he wrote this epistle to them, towards the latter end of the said month, when the persecution in Africa was drawing to a period.

Written in his retirement.

CYPRIAN to the presbyters Moyſes and Maximus, and to the other confessors his brethren, sendeth greeting.

CELERINUS who hath kept you company in your courageous adherence to the faith of Christ, and approved himself, with you, a true soldier of God, by the gallantry of his behaviour in diverse encounters, is now arrived here; and hath made such a lively representation of your dispositions towards me, that you, your selves, could scarce have done it more effectually, nor more agreeably to my wishes: I fancied I saw each and every one of you before me, when I saw him; and when he entertained me with the pleasing relation of your affection to me, his words seemed yours; and in hearing him, I thought I heard you speaking. It is an infinite satisfaction to me, when such good tidings are brought from such persons as you, by such hands as his: My heart is with you in your confinement; I feel, methinks, the power of those exhortations drawn from the book of God, wherewith you encourage and support each other; I am so united in interest and affection to you, that I bear my part both in the honour you gain by your confession, and in the imprisonment which you suffer for it. Accordingly I am mindful of you in my prayers, both day and night; as well when I minister in the publick sacrifices, as in my own more private retirements and addresses to the throne of grace; where I beg of God, that he would increase your honours, and favour your progress towards the crown of all. But the utmost I can perform in this way, must needs fall short of a just return to your good offices on my behalf; for it is a great deal more which I receive from you, when you are pleased to remember me in your prayers; you, who breathe nothing but the things above, and think of nothing but God and another world, and whom the delay of your martyrdom raises every day to higher and more elevated advances, and whose honours are rather increased, than diminished, by time passing over them. One single act of confession entitles any man to a blessing; yet you confess, as often as you are solicited, to use the means for

^a And night.] So *Clement Alexandrinus* hath mentioned the prayers of christians by night, in *Strom.* b. 7. and *Tertullian* faith of christians temperance at suppers (which was the great meal of those times) that it was governed by a regard to their rising in the night to worship God; in *Apol.* c. 39.

^b Publick sacrifices.] The publick worship was eucharistical, and attended with the great sacrifice; blessing and praise, and hymns, were *Tertullian's* sacrifices, in b. 3. against *Marcion*; and with *Clement Alexandrinus*, in *Strom.* b. 7. prayers, offered up to God in sacrifice from holy minds, which were his altars. But what was called sacrifice the most emphatically, and by way of eminence, was the solemn memorial of Christ's body and blood.

^c Solicited to use the means.] Viz. by their friends, or perhaps by a compassionate magistrate they were solicited to renounce Christ, and so to obtain their dismissal with safety.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXVII.

your deliverance out of prison; you *prefer* in that case your imprisonment; through the gallantry of your courage, and the steadfastness of your faith; every day entitles you to new honours; and every month increases your interest with God: He indeed is once a conqueror, who suffers immediately for the sake of Christ; but he who continues longer in a state of punishment, and struggles a great while with it, without being vanquished, earns every day fresh laurels of victory, and each encounter entitles him to a crown.

§. 2.
That the honour of martyrdom far exceeds all the honours of the world.

2. Let the magistrates of the world, our consuls, or proconsuls, pride themselves, if they please, in the several badges of their office and yearly dignity; you have also your annual honours derived from an higher original, even from heaven; and you have gone on in a perpetual course of glory and conquest, for a space of time^d exceeding now the revolution of the yearly circle. The sun and the moon, in their several courses, have enlightned the earth; but he who made those luminaries, hath shone in upon you in your prison with his gracious light; and the glory of Christ darting it self into your hearts and consciences, hath cleared up to you the gloominess and horror of your forlorn dungeon. The stormy season of the winter hath past in its usual course; which was equalled to you in your imprisonment by the stormy season of persecution: The spring succeeded with its usual gaiety of sweets and flowers; but those sweets and flowers to you were furnished from the garden of paradise, and your heads were adorned with garlands from above. The summer came next, swelling with plenty of various fruits; and the barn-floors were covered with the produce of the harvest: But you, who sowed glory, have reaped in their season the fruits of glory; and now being brought upon the floor of our Lord, you see the chaff burnt up with unquenchable fire; whilst you are, your selves, considered as valuable grain, as precious wheat which hath been fanned and winnowed; and so having stood all tests, and being separated from the chaff, you are to reckon the prison which at present holds you, as the barn into which our Lord hath gathered you. Nor will the parallel fail us in the autumnal season, which brings forwards the vintage, and presses the grape in the wine-press, which is afterwards to fill the cup. You are, therefore, like clusters of swelling grapes in the vineyard of our Lord; like bunches ripe, and fit to be squeezed and pressed, under the weight of the persecution; wherewith the powers of this world are loading you; your prison is to you the wine-press wherein you are thus squeezed; your blood is the wine which runs out from it; and finally, the cup for which all this preparation fits you, is that of martyrdom, which your courage emboldens you to drink of with all alacrity. Thus the year passes with the servants of God; and the vicissitude of the seasons hath its several employments in the way of grace, all leading to a reward in heaven.

§. 3.
That 'tis hard to say, whether they are more blessed who suffer martyrdom once for all, or they who suffer in a long and continued course of it.

3. They are, doubtless, very happy, who have proceeded through these several degrees of glory, and having left the world, have finished the course assigned to their faith and courage; and to the great joy of their Lord, are entered now into 'his embraces', and have received his kiss. But yet your honour certainly is not less, who are still in the midst of the encounter, continue a long time upon the stretch of your powers in it, are ready to follow those who have gone before you in their last and utmost difficulties, stand firm and immovable in all the trials of your faith and constancy; and thus in the

^d Exceeding now the revolution. They were imprisoned the January or February before, just after the martyrdom of pope Fabian, and so had past all the seasons of the year in their confinement.

^e His embraces, and have received his kiss. Concerning the privilege of martyrs, in going directly to Christ, enough hath been either noted, or referred to, upon our author's tract of exhortation to martyrdom: Note in §. the last [without suffering him to wait for it] And as to the kiss of Christ; that hath also been observed to have been an allusion to a rabbinical notion, in ep. 6. §. 3. upon which, that people, after their manner, were very copious. The opinion it self, concerning the martyrs immediate entrance upon their reward, seems well founded in the following texts, viz. Luke 23. 43. Philip. 1. 23. and Revelat. 14. 13.

proof and exercise of your virtues, exhibit a spectacle fit for God to look upon. Indeed the longer your struggle lasts, the more honourable must be your victory, and the crown, which is its recompence, the more massive and weigh y. The battle, 'tis true, is one and single; but it consists of divers skirmishes and charges. Hunger can make no impressions on you; thirst you despise; the noisomeness of your prison, and the horrors of the place, where you are put to the torture, your firmness and courage enable you to slight and to tread all under your feet. Punishment and torture are nothing with you; and you are so far from being afraid of death, that it is the daily object of your wishes; as being easily overcome, by the expected recompence of immortality, and by the view of exchanging it for life eternal, upon such a conquest. What must then be your sentiments, and how truly great must be the soul which harbours such sublime and mighty conceptions? Nothing, certainly, but the will of God, can find any place with you, who think of nothing but the commandments of God, and the rewards which Christ hath assigned to his faithful servants; so that whilst you are yet in the body, you live the life of angels, rather than of men.

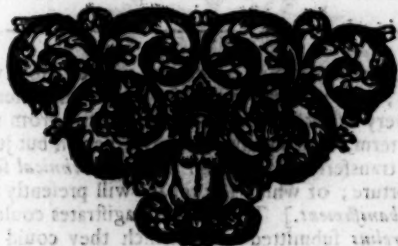
4. It only now remains, my dearest brethren, that I beseech you to be mindful of me; and amidst your lofty and heavenly meditations, to vouchsafe me now and then a kind remembrance in your prayers; inasmuch as a voice so purified as yours hath been, by a glorious confession of Christ, and persevering agreeably to such happy beginnings, cannot but reach the throne of the Almighty, and open its way to heaven: And as it is sent hence victorious and triumphant over the powers of this world; it will likewise prevail in the place it is sent to, and obtain of our Lord whatever it desires. For what is it you can ask of our merciful Lord, which you are not entitled to receive from him, who have so kept his commandments? Who have been so firm and vigorous in your adherence to the rules of evangelical discipline? Who by standing so true to the precepts of our Lord, and to the example of his apostles, and by behaving your selves with such invincible gallantry and courage; have strengthened the faith of many, when it was weak and wavering? You have approved your selves true witnesses of the gospel, and real martyrs of Christ, grafted on his root, and founded immovably upon his rock, as joining your regards for doctrine and discipline together, as exciting others to a fear of God, and as rendering your sufferings exemplary to all. My most blessed and valiant brethren, I always wish your welfare, and beg your remembrance of me.

§. 4.
That the intercessions of confessors are much to be valued.

[†] *A voice so purified.*] The voice particularly here referred to, was the acknowledgement made by these confessors, upon the question put to them by the magistrate, *I am a christian*. And the blood of martyrdom was esteemed equal to the laver of baptism, for cleansing the guilt of all preceding sins.

Rigaltius.

[‡] *Evangelical discipline.*] They adhered to the discipline of the gospel, in exhorting their brethren confessors not to be the instruments of relaxing it; which is mentioned to them with commendation by our author in epist. 28. and in joining their opinion to his, upon not admitting the lapsed too hastily to communion.



A. D. 250.
Epistle
XXXVIII.



EPISTLE XXXVIII.

Written in his
retirement.

Upon the abatement of the persecution, towards the expiration of the proconsul's annual authority; diverse bishops of his province resorted to our author in his retirement; and, with them, he ordained the confessor Aurelius reader, without the knowledge of his clergy or people; probably upon the first day of December, in this same year; however, he took the first opportunity which offered, of acquainting them with it, after it was done, and wrote upon that occasion this letter to them.

CYPRIAN to his presbyters and deacons, and to all his people,
sendeth greeting.

IN promoting persons to any order of the clergy, my custom, dearest brethren, hath hitherto been, to take your advice along with me, and to examine the merits of each candidate, with the whole course of his life and conduct, in a common council with you: But when God hath signally approved a character; we need not, I think, insist upon human testimonies. Now *Aurelius*, our brother, a gallant youth, hath received this signal approbation from our Lord; so that we cannot doubt of his interest in his God; for tho', in the point of years, he is but a ^b novice; yet hath he made great advances in all the honours due to a superior faith and courage; and tho' but a minor in age, yet in the glory he hath gained by two encounters, he is really so much the greater; having twice been put upon confessing the name of Christ, and coming off from both trials with success and victory. The one was indeed upon a comparison with the other, but a skirmish only, which went no farther than his banishment; but the other was a ^c sharper fight, in which however he proved a triumphant conqueror; and balked not the cause which he was called upon to own; and as often as the enemy challenged the servants of God, so often he went forth to battle, with all alacrity and courage; he fought, and overcame. It was not, it seems, enough with him, to enter the lists in the presence of a few, and to be condemned to banishment; but he would moreover signalize his valour in a more eminent example, at the court of judicature; and after he had been too hard for the lower magistrates, he would needs undertake the proconsul himself, and approve his courage ^d in the torture, as he had done before in banishment. Nor is it easy for me to determine which is most illustrious in him, the honour of his wounds, or the modesty of his disposition; or which most commendable, his bashfulness, or his courage. His attainments in the one are so sublime and lofty, whilst his

^a Upon human testimonies.] This hints to us, what the part of those was, whom the bishop consulted upon the point of ordinations; viz. to bear testimony to the character of the candidate: But the authoritative part in this, and every other instance, flowed directly from the bishop; and was solely his.

^b Novice.] Was a technical term, and usually signified a person but just baptized, amongst ecclesiastical writers; but here it seems transferred back again from its technical sense, and to mean his age only.

^c Sharper fight.] Viz. the torture; of which the reader will presently have more.

^d In the torture as before in banishment.] The lower magistrates could banish, but they could not put to the torture: Therefore *Aurelius* submitted to all which they could do against him; and after that, upon the arrival of the proconsul, he underwent the torture, and stood that trial with the same firmness and success. The *Forum*, which I have translated the court of judicature, was the place where the consul's tribunal stood.

humility

humility in the other is so submissive and lowly, that it is evident he is reserved, by a peculiar providence, to be an example to others, of order and discipline in the christian church; and to instruct the servants of God, with what courage they should behave themselves in any trials of their faith; and how conspicuous they should afterwards be for meekness and humility, throughout all their conduct.

A. D. 250:
Epistle
XXXVIII:

2. Such an one deserved much greater honours, and an higher promotion in the church, were we to take our estimate, not from his age, but from his merit; I have thought fit however to let him begin with the office of ^e reading; since nothing is more suitable to that mouth, which hath so gloriously and publicly confessed our Lord, than to set forth the lessons of God's word; nothing more proper, after the utterance of an illustrious confession, than to be employed in reading that gospel of Christ, ^f from which martyrs become entitled to their honourable character; to rise from the rack to the desk; after having appeared before the Gentiles upon the *one*; to stand before our brethren in the *other*; from *that*, to have astonished the people by the gallantry of his confession; and to be heard from *this*, with the applause and satisfaction of all his brethren. You are therefore, my dear brethren, to understand, that I, and my colleagues here with me, have ordained this person; which, I dare say, will very much please you; who cannot but wish, that more of his character were ordained for the service of the church. And as joy is a passion always in haste, and impatient of delays; he reads here to me upon the ^g Lord's day, till he can come amongst you, and perform his office regularly in the church; ^h the peace of which may, I hope, be dated from his entrance upon the function we have now assigned him. Do you, for your parts, continue instant, and join with me, in your prayers to God, that he would be graciously pleased to restore your bishop to you in safety, and, together with your bishop, ⁱ a martyr to be your reader. My dearest brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, in God the Father, and Christ Jesus.

§. 2.
That distinguished merit should gradually be promoted in the church.

^e Reading.] This was not, what we now call *reading prayers*; viz. offering to God the prayers of the congregation, (for that was always done by the presiding officer in worship;) but the nearest resemblance we now have to it, is that part which is performed by our singing men in cathedrals; viz. *reading the lesson*. Aurlius seems here to have skipt the lower office, of *acolythus*, or waiter.

^f From which martyrs become enlisted.] In ep. 27. our author had observed that the *gospel made martyrs*.

^g The Lord's day.] See note in §. 2. of the next epistle [*daily reciting*].

^h The peace of which, &c.] It hath been noted already, in the introduction to this epistle, that the persecution was now much abated, and drawing to a period; and to the hopes of its doing so, these words allude.

ⁱ A martyr.] It hath been before observed, that martyrs were those who had been put upon the torture, and spilt their blood, tho' not lost their lives, in their confession of Christ. And such was this Aurlius.



A. D. 256.
Ep. XXXIX.

EPISTLE XXXIX.

Written in his
retirement.

Upon the same day whereon our author and his colleagues ordained Aurelius reader, they would have ordained the confessor Celerinus, who wrote the letter to Lucian, No 21. to the same office; but he had some doubts upon him, whether he should accept the honour designed for him; till in a vision he was admonished to take it. And in this epistle, written soon after the foregoing one, our author hath acquainted his clergy and people with the whole transaction.

CYPRIAN to his presbyters and deacons, and to all the people, his brethren, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.

WE should receive, my beloved brethren, and acknowledge with all due gratitude, the blessings of providence, wherewith in these our days, the Lord hath been pleased to honour and adorn his church; by relieving his glorious martyrs and confessors from death, and giving them an opportunity to shine among his clergy, in ecclesiastical ministrations, who before had so heroically confessed his name. Wherefore I hope you will take your part with us in rejoicing, when you read our letter, wherein I and my colleagues, who are here with me, lay this matter before you, and acquaint you that our brother Celerinus, who was before so eminent for his courageous and regular behaviour, is now admitted to the order of the clergy, rather by divine than human appointment; who, when he had some doubts upon him, whether he should accept my offer; was admonished by night in a vision, wherein the church herself seemed to interpose with him, that he should not withstand my intreaties and persuasions; and as the church might well have more authority with him, than my single opinion, this prevailed upon and fixed him. It was, indeed, exceedingly improper for him to live without some mark of honour from the church, whom our Lord himself had so far honoured by vouchsafing him the signal glory of confessing his name, and thereby entitling him to an heavenly crown. He was the first of our time who entered the lists, stood foremost in the battel, and in the very beginning of this persecution, undertook the great author and

^a Lay this matter before you.] *Referimus ad vos. Refere ad finatum*, was, when the prince or chief magistrate laid any thing before the senate to have their approbation, and to enact it thence into a law. The use of this phrase, which, as thus applied by our author, is metaphorical and borrowed, doth not infer, that Celerinus was not legitimately, nor authentically ordained, till he had a confirmation from the clergy and people; but only, that they in the ordinary course should have been acquainted with it, and that now it was notified to them in form, that they might receive and acknowledge him in that character.

^b Courageous and regular.] *Virtutibus pariter & moribus gloriosum*. The word *virtus*, when applied to martyrs or confessors, commonly signifies the courage which enabled them to confess; and the word *mores*, when so applied, usually hath respect to their behaving within rule and discipline, which some, we have learnt, of those times were for relaxing.

^c Some mark of honour.] In the opinion of this age, the most distinguished persons of the laity, such as confessors were, were thought honoured, by admission even to the lowest order of the clergy.

^d Undertook the great author and promoter.] This must have been the Emperor himself; for which see *Aurelian's* letter to the letter of Celerinus, No 22, note [forerunner of antichrist].

promoter

promoter of it; and by his invincible firmness in the contest overcoming his adversary, shewed others the way how to overcome him too. Nor was his conquest easily or suddenly gained; nor was his torture dispatched at once, with a few wounds hastily inflicted; but his pains were lingering and leisurely, he was left to struggle a great while with them; yet did he not flinch, but came off to a miracle triumphant over them all. For nineteen days together he was kept in prison, with his legs upon the stretch under the ^c tormenting engine; but though his body was thus in chains, his mind maintained it self in its proper freedom. His flesh, indeed, fell away for want of sustenance; but his spirit subsisted upon the vigour of its faith, and with such holy aliment God sustained it. In the midst of his punishment, he proved himself superior to it; in the midst of his imprisonment, greater than they who threw him in to it: Even when lying upon the ground, he was higher than they who stood upright; the very chains which bound him were not so firm nor so strong as he; the judge who gave sentence, was infinitely inferior to him who received it; and though his feet were fastened to the tormenting engine; yet was he enabled to tread the old serpent under them, to bruise, and finally, to conquer him. And now, in his illustrious body, the marks of his wounds shine most conspicuously; and the footsteps of them are easily traced along his sinews, and limbs, which have the flesh worn off from them by his long and continued hardships. Great and wonderful are the things which our brethren will hear of his virtues, and of the commendations due to them. And if there be any so incredulous, like *Thomas*, as not to trust report; they may have, if *John 20. 27.* they please, the conviction of their eye sight, to confirm the truth of what they shall hear concerning him. The bravery wherewith this eminent servant of God endured his wounds entitled him victorious, as the scars of them will be sure to preserve their memory: Nor was our dear friend, *Celerinus*, heretofore a stranger to these honours; he only goes on in the tract which others of his family have passed before him, and comes up with the achievements of his ancestors and near relations; for his grandmother was long ago crowned with martyrdom; and his uncles, both by father's and mother's side, *Laurentinus* and *Ignatius*, soldiers by profession, and true spiritual soldiers of God, by engaging in Christ's quarrel, and therein overthrowing the devil, have entitled themselves to the martyr's crown and honour by their glorious sufferings. We constantly offer, as you remember, sacrifices for them, upon the yearly return of those days, wherein we celebrate the memorial of the martyr's sufferings. He could not, therefore, degenerate from such domestick examples of faith and gallantry; who had always before his eyes such patterns of heroick courage out of his own family, to excite and quicken him. If then it be a mark of distinguished honour, in human account, to be born of a noble family; how much more must it be so, to be ^h born noble in the account of heaven? I cannot easily determine whose happiness was greatest; his, in having such ancestors; or their's, in having such a descendant? There is such a reciprocal flow of the divine favour between them, that, as their crown is become more splendid, by the honours he hath added to it; so there is an accession to his personal glory, from the merits of his family. Where else now, my beloved brethren, could I place a man so properly, who ⁱ comes to me

^c Tormenting engine.] *Nervum*. A peculiar instrument of torment, wherewith the legs were often so stretched, as to be disjointed.

^d Offer, &c. sacrificus, &c.] This was an oblation made for them at the holy eucharist. See note [no remembrance of him at the holy eucharist] in ep. 1. §. 2.

^e Yearly return.] See notes [observe the days, and offer up in commemoration] in ep. 12. §. 2. where the case of the *memoria martyrum* is more at large represented.

^h Born noble.] i. e. of a family so honourably distinguished for its virtues, which ennobled it in the account of heaven, and in the sight of God.

ⁱ Comes to me.] *Celerinus* came from Rome to our author.

A. D. 250.
Ep. XXXIX.

with such singular vouchsafements from our Lord, and with ^k such honourable testimonies, even from his grand persecutor himself, who was infinitely astonished at his bravery and firmness; (where, I ask, should I place such a man so properly) as upon the desk, which is, as it were, the tribunal of the church; where, by the advantage of the height he stands upon, he may be conspicuous, as he ought to be, to all the people, and may read to them those precepts, and that Gospel of our Lord, which he hath so faithfully transcribed into his own practice? That the voice which hath confessed Christ, may be heard ^l daily reciting the words of Christ? And in time, no doubt, he will take care to deserve promotion to some higher order in the church.

§. 2.
That he is singularly fit to bear office in the church, who may be imitated, as well as heard in it.

2. There is nothing, wherein a *confessor* can be more serviceable to the brethren, than if, whilst they hear from his mouth the gospel-lessons, they may at the same time copy from the *reader's* practice. Wherefore it was upon all accounts fit to join him with *Aurelius* in the office of *reading*, who had before been joined with him upon an equal foot in all manner of virtues, and in all the commendations due to them; both alike *exalted* in praise and honour; and *lowly* alike in all humble behaviour; both alike *advanced*, by the favours of heaven; and alike *condescensive* and orderly in their carriage; both alike exemplary for their *courage*, and for their regard to rule and *discipline*; alike fitted for the times of *persecution*, or of *peace*; alike approving their *bravery* in the *one*, and ^m their *modesty* in the *other*. Our Lord rejoices, in having such servants; in such a sort of *confessors*, as these, he glories; who so proceed in the road of their deserved honours, as, at the same time, to set others an example of regularity and discipline. For such purposes as these, it was the will of Christ, that they should continue longer in his church, and be delivered from the very jaws of death, be almost raised to life again, and restored to a state of health and safety; that our brethren might observe them, when *highest* in honour, *lowest* in their own conceit, and thence be induced to follow their example. You are to understand them therefore as ordained readers only for the present, because such a *light*, as theirs, ought to be *set upon a candlestick*, that it may *give light to all*; and such well-favoured countenances should be placed on a ⁿ rising ground, where they may be seen by all the people, who may be thence excited to follow their example, and to attain like honours with them. But you are to take notice, that I design them for the farther honour of the priesthood; that they may be thence entitled to the same ^o monthly dividends with our presbyters, from the common stock of our brethrens contributions; and fit with us as such ^p in the consistory, as their years shall advance and qualify them; although indeed he cannot properly be esteemed ^q deficient in point of age, who hath already attained the most consummate honours, to which any age could have entitled him. My dear and much-wanted brethren, I always wish your welfare, and so take my leave of you.

Matt. 5. 15.

^k Such honourable testimonies.] Cum testimonio & miraculo ejus ipsius qui se persecutus fuerat; i. e. the Emperor Decius, whom (as Lucian tells Celerinus in his letter No. 22.) Celerinus had plainly intimidated; which refers to some notable passage, in his confession, not fully nor particularly recorded.

^l Daily reciting.] In the preceding epistle (towards the end of it) our author had mentioned Aurelius, as reading to him on the Lord's day; which, I suppose, was specified, as the day of most solemn worship: But here, it should seem, that the reader's office was daily; and so must therefore have been the worship, which he bore this part in.

^m Their modesty.] Viz. by not over-shooting their privilege, as some of the confessors did, in the case of the lapsed.

ⁿ Rising ground.] This is an allusion to the reading desk, which was raised for the advantage of hearing.

^o Monthly dividends.] See note [suspended from their monthly dividend] in epist. 34. §. 2. and note [contributions of lay-brethren] in epist. 1. §. 2. Presbyters had therefore an higher proportion out of this common stock than the inferior orders of clergy had.

^p In the consistory.] The bishop's throne was upon an eminence, behind the altar, and his presbyters sat round him, in a semicircular form; whilst the people were placed below them, in the body of the church. This was the ecclesiastical consistory, when appointed for any purposes, either of discipline or worship.

^q Deficient in point of age.] Viz. not having attained the age of 25, under which men were then considered as unfit for any order of the clergy. Bishop Fell.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XL.

EPISTE XL.

Was written by our author to his clergy and people, in the same year and month with the two preceding letters; about adding Numidicus, who was a person of distinguished merit, and was ordained a presbyter elsewhere, to the list of the Carthaginian presbyters: He saith, he has a revelation from heaven to this purpose; and intimates, that Numidicus would in time be raised to the higher order of bishops; thence to procure him for the present the more respect from his clergy.

Written in his
retirement.

CYPRIAN to his presbyters and deacons, and to all his people, his dearest and most wanted brethren, sendeth greeting.



Have thought it proper, my dearest brethren, that you should be acquainted with a matter, which is a fit subject of joy to our whole community, and much for the particular honour of our church. You are therefore to understand, that I have received admonitions and ^a directions from above, to add the ^b presbyter *Numidicus* to the roll of our *Carthaginian* presbyters; that he may thence be entitled to ^c sit with me among our clergy, who hath already distinguished himself by his gallant confession, and is famous for the steadiness of his faith and courage; thro' whose influence and persuasion, a large number of martyrs is already gone before him, being sent to their blessed abodes, by fire and stoning; and who beheld with satisfaction his wife burnt to death by his side, with many others; or, as I should rather say, carried in safety to a better life: He himself was half roasted, and covered with stones, and so left for dead; and, when his daughter, with the true solicitude of a filial tenderness and piety, was looking out the body of her father; she found him just alive, drew him out of the heap, and, by the application of cordials and proper remedies, brought him to himself again; and, after all, had much ado to persuade him to stay behind his companions, whom ^d he had sent to God before him; but now we see the good purpose which is answered by his stay; and how it is the pleasure of our Lord, that he should be joined with our clergy, and that our number, which the lapse of some presbyters hath diminished, should be recruited, and adorned, with such illustrious priests: And in due time, God willing, when I shall return to you in safety, thro' the protection of our Lord; I doubt not but he will be promoted ^e to an higher dignity in the church. Mean while let ^f that take place which hath been already revealed to me; and let us accept with thankfulness the ^g favourable vouchsafement of providence

^a *Directions from above.*] This was by way of vision, which was a frequent vouchsafement from heaven to our author; and hath been before accounted for, viz. in epist. 7. Note [*vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure.*]

^b *Presbyter Numidicus.*] He was a presbyter before, of some other church; but as *Carthage* was the metropolis of the province; it was a more distinguished honour, to be enrolled in the list of that church's presbyters; to which accordingly he was now promoted.

^c *Sit with me.*] See note [*in the consistory*] epist. 39. §. 2.

^d *He had sent.*] Viz. by his influence and persuasion, as before related.

^e *To an higher dignity.*] Viz. to the episcopate.

^f *That take place which hath been already revealed.*] Viz. what was directed to our author in a vision, about adding him to the list of the *Carthaginian* presbyters.

^g *Favourable vouchsafement.*] In taking such particular care of us, as to direct us to such a presbyter.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XL.

to our church, and hope to be furnished with more such ornaments from the mercies of our Lord; that so when his church shall have^b recovered her health and strength, our confistory may flourish and abound in such meek and humble members. My dear and much wanted brethren, I always wish your welfare most heartily.

^b Recovered her health and strength.] Viz. after both had been so grievously impaired by the preceding persecution.



Epistle XLI.

EPISTLE XLI.

Written in his
retirement.

Whilst the preceding transactions were in agitation, the presbyter Novatus procured Felicissimus to be ordained his deacon, without the knowledge of our author. This Felicissimus had always been an enemy to St. Cyprian's election to the bishoprick of Carthage; and now he was thus surreptitiously ordained deacon; he entered into more avowed factions and combinations against his bishop, burning before more secretly blowed the coals of contention between the lapsed and confessors, and our author. But now he was ordained a deacon; he made an open rupture, and got some of the more impatient of the lapsed to join with him; and when our author had sent to Carthage, Caldonius and Herculanus, (bishops) with the forementioned Numidicus, (presbyter) as his deputies, in conjunction with Rogatianus, who acted before for him in that quality; to settle divers matters there, and especially to relieve the necessitous and distressed: Felicissimus interposed, and threatened such as should comply with our author's directions, that they should not communicate with him. Of all which the said deputies of St. Cyprian having certified him in a letter, which is not now extant, he returns them for answer what here follows.

CYPRIAN to Caldonius and Herculanus, his colleagues; as likewise to Rogatianus and Numidicus, his brethren presbyters, sendeth greeting.

§. I.



Was exceedingly concerned, my dearest brethren, at the receipt of your letter; as having always propounded to my self, and much desired, the keeping my flock and people safe and untainted, as the law of charity obliges us to endeavour; whereas now you tell me, that *Felicissimus* hath engaged in divers unjustifiable designs and practices; and, besides his former tricks and frauds, of which I knew a great deal some time ago, he is now openly attempting^a to draw off a part of my people from their bishop, to separate the sheep from their shepherd, and the children from their parent, and so to disperse and scatter the members of Christ: And whereas I sent you as my deputies, ^b to supply the necessities of our

^a To draw off a part of my people from their bishop.] In this consisted the very quintessence of schism.

^b To supply the necessities.] *Us expungeretis necessitates*, &c. The word *expungo* hath this meaning; saith *Rigaltius*; there was a list kept in every church, of the poor; out of which those names were expunged, or struck out, whose necessities were supplied, as that they had no farther occasion for receiving alms.

brethren; and, if any would follow their own occupations, to furnish them with such assistance as might put them into the way of it; with directions to you to distinguish between the age, and circumstances, and merits of each particular; that so, by knowing the case of each person distinctly, I, whose business and charge it is, might be enabled to promote such of them, as should be found deserving, by their meekness and humility, ^c to some office and administration in the church: *He* (it seems) hath interposed, to prevent the supply of such persons necessities, and the enquiry which I had desired should be made into their several circumstances; nay, and with unprecedented boldness and fury, hath threatned such of our brethren as came first for the said supply, that if they gave into my measures, they should not be permitted to communicate with him ^d in the place of his retirement; and farther yet, without the least regard to my station, or to your presence and authority, hath disturbed the peace of our brethren, and broke off from them, with divers in his company, presumptuously thereby setting himself at the head of the faction; in which attempt, however, I cannot but rejoice, that several have left him, and have chosen to acquiesce in your measures, and to abide with their mother the church, and to receive her pay from the hands of her bishop; wherein I doubt not, they will soon be followed by others, who will return to order, and leave this mad man to himself; but since *Felicissimus* hath given out his threats, that they should not be permitted to communicate with him in his retirement, who should give into my measures, *i. e.* indeed, who should communicate with me: Let him bear the burden of the sentence which himself first denounced, and let him know that ^e I have deprived him of communion; especially since to his notorious frauds and extortions, of which I have clear and abundant proofs, he hath added the crime of adultery; which divers of our brethren, men of undoubted character, say they can and will prove upon him: Of all which matters we shall take a fuller cognizance, when it shall please God to give my colleagues and my self an opportunity of meeting in council: And let *Augendus* likewise, if he persevere in his fault, stand condemned to the same sentence, which that rash and seditious ring-leader hath brought upon himself; since he hath so far forgotten the regards he owes to his church and bishop, as to make one in this pestilent and factious conspiracy: In like manner, whoever else shall be found concerned in it, should be warned, that they are not to expect communion with us in the church, from which, of their own accord, they have chosen to be separated. I desire you would read this letter to our brethren; and then transmit it to *Carthage* ^f to my clergy there, inserting the names of such as have joined with *Felicissimus*. My dear brethren, I always wish your welfare.

A. D. 250.
Epistle XLII.

^c To some office and administration.] To some of the lower offices, viz. door-keeper, or waiter; which was a prudential way of lessening expences (saith bishop Fell) by maintaining such persons in this way, who else must have been maintained in some other, and so have added to the publick charge.

^d In the place of his retirement.] *In monte.* Rigaltius conjectures here, that *Felicissimus* had retired to some solitary place upon a mountain, under pretence of greater sanctity: But our very learned editor observes, that there was a city near *Carthage* called *Montis*, to which it is more probable he retreated; or perhaps to some place in *Carthage*, distinguished by that name; as in the city of *Rome*, *Mons Palatinus*, *Viminalis*; and in *Corinth*, the *Acrocorinthus*, were places of eminence. But I think the second conjecture most probable, that he retired to a distinct city called *Montis*; from whence the *Donatists*, who succeeded the *Novatians* in their schism, might well enough be called *Montenses*.

^e I have deprived him.] We see here, as well as from ep. 16. (see note there, [restrain them from ministering] in §. 2.) that the bishop could deprive of communion, without asking any one's consent, and even presbyters themselves were subject to his single censure.

^f To my clergy there.] Hence it should seem, that *Caldonius* and *Herculanus* were now in their dioceses when this letter was sent to them; and that they were directed by it to communicate this with the soonest to the clergy of *Carthage*, where our author hoped speedily to be in person; and there he would find the names of such as had joined with *Felicissimus*, which he desires to have inserted. *Caldonius* and *Herculanus*, I presume, went upon this occasion to *Carthage*, and there transacted what we have an account of in the following letter.

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLII.



EPISTLE XLII.

Written in our
author's re-
sirement.

In pursuance of the powers given by our author to his deputies in the preceding letter; they excommunicated the persons he had ordered them to excommunicate, and notify it to him in this epistle, written about the beginning of the year 251.

Caldonius and Herculanius his colleagues, together with Rogatianus and Numidicus presbyters, to CYPRIAN send greeting.



WE have deprived *Felicissimus* and *Augendus* of communion; as we have likewise done by *Repustus*,^a one of the exiles, and *Irene* one of the confessors,^b who have spilt their blood in the cause of Christ; and *Paula*, the sempstress; which I thought it most proper you should be acquainted with from my hand: We have likewise excommunicated *Sopbronius*, with^c *Soliasus* the carrier, who is one of the exiles too.

^a One of the exiles.] *Viz.* one who, whilst a member of the church, had suffered banishment, for the cause of Christ; and who was afterwards considered, with the rest, under a distinct character.

^b Who have spilt their blood.] Those confessors, who had been put to the torture, and lost some of their blood, were afterwards entitled *floridi*, or *ruili*; *red* or *florid* confessors, in regard to their blood which they had so spilt. Many of these grew insolent and disorderly, upon the conceit of their own high merits; and gave our author afterwards a great deal of disturbance in the course of his ministry.

^c My hand.] Here *Caldonius* speaks for himself in the singular number.

^d Soliasus the carrier.] *Rigaltius* would read it thus: *Sopbronius* one of the exiles, with *Soliasus* and *Budinarius*; so making them three; but our right reverend editor, will have *Budinarius* to be read *Burdonarius*, from *Burdo* a word of Hebrew extract, signifying a mule; and so to denominate his profession, a carrier upon mules; as *Paula* the sempstress had before been named with her profession.



EPISTLE

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIII.

EPISTLE XLIII.

The retirement of Felicissimus, with the five presbyters, who had joined with him, gave our author the occasion of writing this epistle to his people. Their names were Fortunatus, Jovinus, Maximus, Donatus, and Gordius. And as there do not appear to have been above three more presbyters, viz. Britius, Rogatianus, and Numidicus, who attended the Carthaginian consistory in the time of persecution; these five had the better colour for their factious pretences, as making a majority in that assembly; which opportunity they took hold of, as having been always enemies to our author's advancement, and all along encouraging the lapsed against him. This new attempt of theirs prevented his return for some time, till he could secure himself against their factious designs. At the same time Novatus went to Rome from Africa, after having sowed these seeds of dissention in Carthage, and there prevailed with Novatian to make a schism in that church. Upon which Moyles, the confessor, who till then was very intimate with Novatian, just before he died (as he died soon after in prison) would hold no farther communion with him. This was in the month of January, or the beginning of February. Thus Novatus being sure of a party in Africa, thought he might proceed the more securely in his attempts at Rome. And so these two schisms were coincident. Our author therefore wrote to his people, to warn them of these five presbyters, and to excuse his coming amongst them, till he could see what turn that affair would take; which he promises however he would do soon after Easter; tho' he was prevented by this incident the whole month of March.

CYPRIAN to all his people sendeth greeting.



ALTHOUGH, my dear brethren, that honest and faithful presbyter *Britius*, as likewise the presbyters *Rogatianus* and *Numidicus*, who have been honoured with the illustrious character of confessors; and the deacons; all good men, who have given up themselves entirely to the service of the church, with the rest of our subordinate and lower officers, are (each of them) very diligent in their attendance upon their respective offices and ministrations amongst you; and fail not to fortify you with continual exhortations, and labour to regulate the dispositions of the lapsed with seasonable counsel, and to give them a just sense of their grievous sin; yet I cannot but think it incumbent upon me also to add, according to my ability, my own persuasives and advices, and to visit you by letter, whilst I am restrained from doing it in person; I say to visit you, my dearest brethren, by letter; since the malicious contrivances of certain presbyters, have prevented my coming amongst you, before Easter; who have not yet (it seems) forgot their former conspiracy against me,

^a With the rest of our subordinate officers.] These were subdeacons, readers, waiters, &c.

^b Certain presbyters.] These were the five presbyters mentioned in the introduction to this epistle, who opposed our author's election to his bishoprick, and continued their persecutions of him, upon the case of the lapsed, and indeed upon all occasions, wherein they could.

^c Before Easter.] Several reasons are given by *Rigaltius*, and noted by our most learned editor, why this particular season made our author's return improper; viz. its solemnities; which would bring a great

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIII.

me, but retain their old grudge against my episcopate, and your election of me to it, and ^a the approbation of God who confirmed your choice; and accordingly they now renew their opposition to me, and resume their sacrilegious designs, with their usual craft. Indeed it hath fallen out very providentially, though I neither wished nor desired it; nay, though I had resolved to put up and pardon all their attempts against me, that the punishment hath now overtaken them, which they so well deserved; that they have cast themselves out of the church without my doing it; that their own consciences have pronounced against them the sentence, which would otherwise have been doomed to them by ^e your unerring vote; and in short, that these wicked conspirators have voluntarily thrown themselves out of the church. I think it is now apparent whence the faction of *Felicissimus* had its rise and growth, and its main supports. These were the persons who formerly encouraged the confessors to disagree with their bishop, and to slacken the reins of ecclesiastical discipline, quite contrary to the rules of the gospel; and thereby to stain the honour of their confession, by a behaviour inconsistent with it. And not content with corrupting the minds of the confessors, and with arming a part of our brethren against the ^f priesthood of God; they have proceeded yet farther in their pernicious designs, to engage the lapsed against their own true interest; to call off the sick and wounded persons, who through the misfortune of their fall, are become less capable of adhering with firmness to wholsom and proper counsel (to call them off, I say) from a just provision for their health and cure; and by the insidious prospect of a delusive destructive peace, without any time of continuance in prayers and deprecations, which are the proper methods of appeasing God's wrath, to seduce them into precipitate and fatal measures. But be you, my brethren, I beseech you, upon your guard against the snares of the devil; consider that your salvation is at stake, and be the more diligent in your endeavours to countermine this hellish stratagem.

§. 2.
That the faction of these schismatics was equivalent to another persecution.

2. This, in effect, is a trial equal to that of another persecution; and these five presbyters, in this new trial, are what ^g those five eminent persons were in the old one; who subscribed the edict, for overturning our faith, and for gaining over some of our weaker brethren, to abandon the truth, and so to fall into their snare. The same ruinous measures are now going forwards by the means of those five presbyters, who have joined with *Felicissimus*; and great endeavours are used that God should not be prayed to, and that they who have denied Christ, should not ask his pardon, when they have so shamefully denied

great concourse of people together, and probably raise tumults, upon the arrival of their bishop after so long an absence; when the case of the lapsed would be debated with much warmth and zeal: And then when the first days of the festival were over, as the concourse of the people would be lessened, so diverse bishops would meet in course at Carthage, to hold their stated provincial council, which was at that time of the year: And with their authority he might better be enabled to support himself against his own factions presbyters, and the interest they had formed against him; as well as against the importunities of the lapsed: Upon these several views he might think it most advisable to defer his return till after Easter.

[The approbation of God.] What was regularly done by men in ecclesiastical ministrations or elections, was supposed to have *Dei iudicium*, the approbation of God along with it, in virtue of that promise which Christ made to his apostles, of being with them always, even to the end of the world. Matt. 28. 20.

[Your unerring vote.] *Secundum vestra divina suffragia.* St. Cyprian's deputies had so managed with the people of Carthage (as we may observe from the 42^d epistle) that diverse of these faction persons were excommunicated; and had not these five presbyters retired voluntarily, and declared they would join with none who adhered to our author, thereby excommunicating themselves; they would have met the same fate which our author had allotted to *Felicissimus* and his adherents in ep. 41.

[Priesthood of God.] *Sacerdotium Dei.* This means the episcopal authority; *sacerdos* usually signifying a bishop with our author, and *sacerdotium* the episcopate, or episcopal office.

[Those five eminent persons.] *Quinque primores illi.* These were five persons of the first rank in Carthage, who had concurred with the opinion of the lower magistrates there, to begin the persecution against christians, and signed the edict for that purpose with them. These he resembles to the five presbyters; who, in this new trial, this persecution, as he calls it, from within the church, associated with *Felicissimus* in his factious attempts against her discipline. *Pamelinus* conjectures, that these five eminent persons were represented to our author in a vision as subscribing the magistrate's edict; and that he here alludes to such a vision.

him;

him; that they who have sinned so grievously, should^h do no penance for their crime; that the priests andⁱ bishops should have no part nor agency in reconciling the offender to God; but on the contrary, that they should in this case be quite neglected, and instead of their ministry, that a presumptuous and novel method should take place against the discipline of the gospel; and though it hath been once determined as well by me as by the confessors and clergy of^k the city, and indeed by all the bishops within my province, and beyond it; to innovate nothing in the case of the lapsed, till we meet all together and confer our opinions upon this subject with each other, and agree at last upon some middle course, which shall be tempered with a due regard both to discipline and compassion; yet this determination of ours is openly and avowedly opposed; and thus all sacerdotal authority and power will be lost through the turbulency and faction of these conspirators. It will not be easy for me to make you sensible of the torment I endure, that I cannot for the present come amongst you; that I have not an opportunity of addressing my self distinctly to each of you, and of exhorting you all to abide by the rules and precepts of the gospel. It is not yet enough to have been now^l in the second year of my banishment; to have endured a long and melancholly separation from your sight and company; to have all the while lamented, by my self, my absence from you, with incessant tears; to have dwelt whole days and nights upon the cutting consideration, that your bishop, whom you had chosen with so much zeal and affection, could not yet come amongst you, nor throw himself into your arms and embraces; but I must have this farther mortification added to my former troubles, that I cannot^m *even now*, at a time when I am so much wanted, break out of my retirement, and force a passage to you; but am prevented by a necessary caution, upon the menaces and designs of my knavish presbyters, lest by returning in such a juncture, occasion should be given for raisingⁿ some greater tumult; and so the bishop, whose province it is, by all the means in his power, to provide for the peace and safety of his flock, should hence become accessory to a renewal of the persecution, and to re-kindling the flames which are but just extinguished. Here therefore I cannot but exhort and advise you, my beloved brethren, not to trust such pernicious counsellors, nor to give your assent too easily to their deceitful words; who would fain persuade you to mistake darkness for light, night for day, want for plenty, poyson for medicine, and death for a state of health and safety. And let them not impose upon you, by the pretence of age and authority; since they do but herein resemble those two wicked *elders*, who would have violated the chastity of *Susannah*; like *them*, endeavouring to sophisticate the truth, and to corrupt the purity of the gospel, with strange and bastard doc-

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIII.

Hist. Susan.
v. 20.

^h Do no penance.] *Tollatur poenitentia.* The outward and inward duty of repentance are both express'd by our author, and generally by the fathers under the same name. They had, indeed, no notion of a great crime, being pardoned without *bosh*, viz. outward penance, and inward contrition; the one satisfied the church in the point of scandal; the other cleansed the conscience, and opened the way to a pardon from God.

ⁱ Bishops should have no part nor agency.] Their part in this case, was to have loosed the sinner from his ecclesiastical bond, when he had continued for a due time bound by it; and the complaint here was, that by a neglect of the external duty (for the internal might be performed in this case) they were deprived of the part belonging to them in the reconciliation of the sinner to God.

^k The city.] Viz. Rome, called by way of eminence, *the city*; the letters of their confessors and clergy, upon this affair, the reader hath had in No 31 and 36. Bp. Fell.

^l In the second year of my banishment.] So I apprehend our author must mean by his *exilium Biennij*; since he had now been but one year compleat in banishment, from the first month, or thereabouts, of the year 250, to the 2^d or 3^d month of the year 251.

^m Even now.] Though the danger of the persecution, which had hitherto prevented his return, was now over; yet the faction of his presbyters still hindered him.

ⁿ Some greater tumult.] He had stayed, before his retirement, till his presence caused very strong and tumultuous demands of throwing him to the lions; and thence the persecution took its rise. He was therefore apprehensive, that the noise which would be made upon his return, might be increased by the contrivance of these presbyters, and so a greater tumult be raised than what he had avoided by his retirement. The persecution was just over, and he was loth to risque the revival of it.

trines,

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIII.
Jerem. 23.
16, 17.

trines. Our Lord hath proclaimed and said; *Hearken not unto the words of false prophets, because ° the visions of their own hearts deceive them. They say to them who despise the word of the Lord, ye shall have peace.* Thus these men offer peace, to which themselves have no title; and they who have forsook the church, undertake and pretend to bring the lapsed back again into it.

§. 3.
One God, one
Christ, and
one church.
Matt. 16. 18.

Luke 11. 23.

2 Tim. 2. 16,
17.

Matt. 15. 14.

Deut. 13. 5.

3. There is one God, and one Christ, and one church, and but ^P one episcopal chair, originally founded on *Peter*, by our Lord's authority. There cannot therefore be erected another altar, or another priesthood constituted, besides this one altar, and one priesthood, already constituted and erected. *Whosoever gathereth elsewhere, scattereth.* Whatsoever man in his rage or rashness shall appoint, in defiance of a *divine* institution, must be a spurious, profane, and ⁹ sacrilegious ordinance. From the infection of such men depart, and *shun* their babblings, as you would a *canker*, or the plague; our Lord himself having forewarned you of them, and told you, that *they are blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* They would prevent the effect of your prayers, which you put up to God, jointly with us, night and day, in order to reconcile yourselves to him, by a regular course of penance; they would put a stop to all our tears, with which ^r your sin is gradually washed away; and, in fine, they would hinder your having that ^r peace, which you so sincerely beg of our merciful Lord; forgetting that it is written; *That prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, who shall speak to turn you away from the Lord your God, shall be put to death.* Wherefore, my brethren, let no one turn you aside from the ways of the Lord; let no one be suffered to separate christians from the gospel; or to take off from the church, the children of the church. Let such as have a mind to perish, perish by themselves; let such as have departed from the church, continue out of it alone; let such as have rebelled against their bishops, be the only persons without bishops; let them singly bear the punishment of their wicked contrivance, who in your opinion ^r heretofore deserved it, and have now a confirmation of their sentence from God himself.

Our

° *The visions of their own hearts.*] The Hebrew, the LXX, and other versions, are pretty unanimous in a sense somewhat different from our author's; and mean, that the prophets speak of their own heads, and are not commanded by God to say what they do say. So that instead of *καὶ αὐτοὶ αὐτῶν τὰς ὁρασεις αὐτῶν λαλοῦσιν*. Our author seems (as bishop Fell observes) to have read the passage thus; *καὶ αὐτοὶ αὐτῶν ὁρασεις καρδίας αὐτῶν*.

^P *One episcopal chair founded on Peter.*] These words refer, most plainly, to each particular church, which had indeed but one episcopal chair, and but one altar. The argument would be dilute and unconvulsive, if any thing were here asserted of the universal church, or of any primacy hence intended for the see of Rome: For the rights of the Carthaginian see were here in question, and not of the Roman. Our modern separatists must therefore give up this point to the Romanists, and make our author an advocate for their injurious claims; or else must acknowledge the bishop of each diocese, the principle of unity to all its members, and the head, from whence was derived to them all spiritual nourishment. If he forsook the faith, or the unity of the episcopal college, they had no power to censure him; but when it was notified to them from his colleagues, that he did so; they were to consider him thenceforward, as an *incapable subject*, and so were, to provide themselves with one *capable*: Otherwise, he was to be regarded as their *head*; and a particular church was constituted of him, as *head*; and of the clergy and people, as *members*; altogether making *one body*; and the division of the *members* from their *head*, made them *schismatical*. The Cyprianic and Ignatian principles (which in this point are perfectly the same) make the whole so clear, that nothing but great ignorance, or great prejudice, could ever controvert their notions of church-unity. See note in §. 3. of the *unity of the church* [*saying unto Peter*]; note [*Zetus ordained bishop in his stead*] epist. 50. and note [*are found consenting*] epist. 67. §. 2.

⁹ *Sacrilegious.*] As robbing God of his proper honour.

^r *Your sin is washed away.*] The intercessions and tears of the faithful for the penitent in the public congregation, were thought to contribute a great deal to his forgiveness.

^r *Peace.*] The peace of the church, and the pardon of God, were supposed to go together; the one, as a necessary medium to the other. It was called *peace*, not only with an eye of regard to the distance there had been between the church and the offender; but from the *salutations* of the faithful to each other, which were not given to those in a state of penance; so we read of the *kiss of peace*.

^r *Heretofore deserved it.*] Probably when they opposed our author's election; but then he bore with them, notwithstanding that his people thought they did *then* deserve to be excommunicated; but *now* they were actually (and *ipso facto*) excommunicated, by their departure from the church, and afterwards by an additional sentence from their bishop; and there was no doubt but that a sentence so regularly

Our Lord hath given us in his gospel a very proper caution, where he saith; *Te reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.* A. D. 251. Epist. XLIII. Mark 7. 9. Wherefore let such as reject the commandment of God, and, instead of it, would establish their own tradition, be, themselves, rejected, and exploded by you, with all constancy and firmness. It is more than enough, that the lapsed have fallen once; when they are just upon the point of rising, let no one deal so ill by them, as to throw them down again. When we are praying to God, that *his hand and his arm would assist and raise them,* from the ground they lie upon; let no one employ his pains either to keep them down, or to sink them yet lower. Let no one be so cruel to these unhappy persons, who are half dead already, and praying earnestly for a recovery, as to turn them aside from the only means and hopes of it. When they are stumbling in the darkness, wherewith their fall hath surrounded them; let no one be so barbarous as to put out the light, which should direct them to the way of salvation. The apostle hath well instructed us, saying; *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to his doctrine; he is proud, knowing nothing; from such we are to withdraw.* 1 Tim. 6. 3. 4. 5. And again he saith; *Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of them cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: Be ye not therefore partakers with them:* Ephes. 5. 6, 7. There is no reason why you should suffer your selves to be deceived with vain words, and thence to become partakers of their sin: From such I beseech you to withdraw your selves, and to acquiesce in my counsels, who pray for you daily and incessantly to our Lord; who beseech him, that he would mercifully vouchsafe *his peace to the mother first, and then to her children.* Wherefore do you join for this purpose your prayers, and tears, and supplications, with me; avoid those wolves, who would separate the sheep from their shepherd; beware of that envenomed tongue of the devil, who was a deceiver from the beginning of the world; a liar and flatterer, with design of mischief; a large promiser of good things, but who makes his payments always in evil ones; who undertakes for life to you, only that he may the more surely destroy you. His words and the venom of them are, I think, most evident in the case now depending; he amuses you with the prospect of a delusive peace, only to hinder your having a good and safe one; he undertakes for your salvation, only to prevent the sinners seeking it in a proper way; he warrants the church to you, whilst his whole aim and contrivance tend to separate for ever from it, those who are so weak as to believe, or trust him.

4. This, my brethren, is the proper season for the trial of your perseverance, who have all along stood fast, and of your preserving that glorious firmness and constancy, which you maintained in the persecution; and for you, who thro' the wiles of our adversary have fallen, this is likewise a sort of second trial, wherein you will best approve your selves, by laying a solid foundation for your hope, and for that peace of the church, which you are so solicitous to obtain; and therefore in order to your having the forgiveness of our Lord; you will abide, I hope, in communion with his priests, and will not depart from them; since it is written; *And the man who will do* 9. 4. That it is not so much confession, as perseverance, which recommends to God. Dent. 17. 12

gularly pronounced, was confirmed in heaven. This was *secundum Dei iudicia* in the plural, because they had pronounced this sentence *once* against themselves by departing from the church; and it was renewed to them afterwards by the proper judge. And both were *Dei iudicia*, the judgments of God.

His hand, &c.] These words were probably known parts of the prayer, which was used for penitents.

From the ground they lie upon.] This alluded to the humble posture of prostration upon the ground, wherein penitents placed themselves.

His peace to the mother first.] This was all along our author's opinion, that the church should first have peaceable and settled times, and the persecution be over, before he would enter upon the consideration of granting peace to the lapsed.

Undertakes for life.] Viz. by deceiving you with the view of an irregular approach to communion, which is as bad as death.

D. A. 251.
Epistle XLIII.

presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge who shall be in those days, even that man shall dye. This is the last effort of the persecution against us; with this temptation it will take its leave of us; and even this it self, thro' the mercy of our Lord, will soon be over; so that I shall be able to come amongst you soon after *Easter* day, ² with my colleagues; in whose presence we shall be able to settle every thing, which yet remains to be adjusted, to all your satisfactions, in a common council. Mean while, if there be any, who decline submitting to penance, and will not endeavour by proper methods to reconcile themselves to God; and shall go over to *Felicissimus* and his adherents, and join themselves with that heretical faction; let them take notice, that they will not be suffered to ³ return to the church at pleasure, nor to communicate with the bishops and people of Christ. My dear brethren, I always wish your welfare, and I beseech you to continue instant with me in prayer for imploring the mercies of God.

² *With my colleagues.*] Viz. in the provincial council, which was customarily held at that time of the year.

³ *To return to the church, at pleasure.*] The two last words are added by me, as explanatory of our author's meaning; who only said, in terms more absolute, that they should not return to the church. By penance, 'tis certain, they might return to it; but they could not, *as now*, return, merely because they were pleased to return. To communicate with the bishops and people of Christ, was then a *privilege*, which, when forfeited, was not easily recovered.



Epist. XLIV.

EPISTLE XLIV.

Here follow
the epistles
written du-
ring the ponti-
ficate of Cor-
nelius, after
our author's
return.

Cornelius was ordained bishop of Rome in the month of June, A. D. 251; and in that same month sent letters to our author, notifying his election, and the schism which was there commenced by Novatian and his party: Whereupon St. Cyprian not having yet heard, that Novatian had procured himself to be ordained anti-pope by three Italian bishops (which number of ordainers the canons and customs of the church made necessary) sent Caldonius and Fortunatus, two African bishops, from the council which he held upon his return, with orders to attempt the pacification of those troubles; but they could not succeed, Novatian persisting in his claims, and blackning Cornelius upon divers pretences, and especially upon the point of his communicating with the lapsed. In the month of July he (Novatian) sent his agents to Carthage, to notify there his own ordination; but upon the arrival of two African bishops, Pompeius and Stephanus from Rome, who certified, that they were present at the ordination of Cornelius, which was prior to that of Novatian, and in all points regular; those agents were rejected, and thereupon went from house to house, and from town to town, to gain upon the people: Of all which our author acquaints Cornelius in this epistle, which was written about the beginning of July, and is the first of those which remain to us after his quitting his retirement; it was sent by Primitivus, one of his presbyters.

CYPRIAN

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIV.

CYPRIAN to ^a his brother Cornelius, sendeth greeting.



HERE are arrived here, dearest brother, as agents from *Novatian*, *Maximus*, a presbyter, and *Augendus*, a deacon, together with one *Macheus* and *Longinus*. But as we understood from the letters they brought with them, as well as from their discourse and assertion, that *Novatian* was ordained bishop; we were so concerned at the irregularity of the practice, and of an ordination made in opposition to the catholick church, that we presently determined to restrain them from communion with us, confuting their pretences, and disproving their assertions. Mean while my self, and divers of my colleagues, who were here assembled, waited for the return of our colleagues, *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*, whom we had lately sent as our legates to you, and to our brethren bishops, who were present at your ordination; that so upon their arrival, and report to us of the matter of fact, we might be enabled to repress the boldness of the adverse party with the clearer evidence, and the fuller authority. But whilst we were waiting for their return; our colleagues *Pompeius* and *Stephanus* arrived here; who furnished us with such abundant testimonies, and were persons so credible and sufficient, that we needed no farther information, and wanted not to hear what *Novatian's* agents could say for him: Who, when they broke out upon our ^b stationary assemblies, with great noise and scandalous reflections; and pressed hard for a publick hearing of the crimes which they alledged, and affirmed that they could prove against you, before me and my people; had this for answer; that it was not consistent with the rules we had always proceeded by, to suffer the honour and character of our colleague, who had been regularly ^c chosen and ordained, and approved by manifold testimonies of his worth, to be any farther canvassed or sifted, by the envious reports of his rivals and competitors. And because it would be tedious to give you by letter the detail of their several attempts, and disappointments, and the proofs of heresy which were fastned upon them; I have chosen to refer you to *Primitivus*, our brother presbyter; who, upon his arrival, will make you a full and particular report of every thing as it passed here. And as if they meant no end of their madness and folly; they are continually endeavouring, in these parts, as they have done in yours, to divide the members of Christ, and to engage them in their schism, and so to maim and mangle the body of the catholick church; insomuch, that they run up and down from house to house, through towns and cities, seeking every where to gain associates, who may join with them in their obstinacy and error. To whom we have given this answer, which we often repeat to them; that they ought to drop this fatal controversy, and to acknowledge the impiety of forsaking the church their mother; that they should understand and consider, that when a bishop is once made, and approved by the testimony of his people, and the judgment of his colleagues, ^d another can upon no terms be ap-

^a His brother Cornelius.] Observe in what terms of equality the bishop of *Carthage* accosts the bishop of *Rome*.

^b Stationary assemblies.] These were the *Wednesday* and *Friday* of every week, which were solemn days of fasting and prayer in the primitive church. *Tertullian* hath born testimony to them, as observed in his time. *De Jejun.* cap. 14. and in his book of *prayer*, ch. 14. hath argued for the celebration of the holy eucharist on those days as well as others. And the constitutions in b. 7. c. 23. direct the *Wednesday's* and *Friday's* fast, at *lowest*; one, to commemorate the condemnation of our Lord, and the other, his death. In the same place *Saturday* is directed to be kept *festival*, in honour of the creation; as is *Sunday*, in honour of our Lord's *resurrection*.

^c Chosen, ordained, and approved.] The people's testimony to the life and conversation of the bishop elect was necessary, and there was usually their concurrence had in choosing him; but in the business of ordaining him they had nothing to do; that was performed by bishops only.

^d Another can upon no terms.] So that in our author's time, there was apparently but one bishop to such a city as *Rome*; and another could not be appointed till the former were dead, or deprived.

pointed:

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIV.

pointed: Wherefore, if they have any regard to the peace of the church, or their own true interest; or if they would be thought to maintain and uphold the gospel of Christ, the first thing they have to do, is to return to the church. My dearest brother I bid you heartily farewell.



Epistle XLV.

EPISTLE XLV.

Written after
his return.

Upon the return of Caldonius and Fortunatus, who were sent by our author as his agents to Rome, and upon the report they made to him how false the aspersions were, which had been cast upon Cornelius; the bishops, who were at that time assembled in Carthage, wrote to all their brethren throughout Africa, Numidia, and the two Mauritania's, to acknowledge Cornelius bishop of Rome, and to send him letters of communion. They also wrote a synodical letter to Cornelius, to acquaint him with the case of Felicissimus, and his five presbyters; but these letters are not extant. About the beginning of August, in this year, our author sent this epistle to Cornelius, with the synodical letter, above mentioned, by Mettius his subdeacon, and Nicephorus his waiter; by whom also he sent copies of the letters he had written upon the affair of Felicissimus. The design of this was to renew his acknowledgments of Cornelius, upon the return of his agents; and to warn him of Felicissimus, and his schismatical practices.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius sendeth greeting.



WE thought it, my dear brother, incumbent on us, as servants of God, and especially as legitimate bishops, who are lovers of peace and order, to send, as we lately did, to you, our colleagues *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*; that they might use their best endeavours towards reducing the members of our divided body to the unity of the catholick church, and repairing the bonds of christian charity. To this end we hoped the^b persuasives used in our letter, their own presence amongst you, and the assistance of all your counsels, might in a good degree contribute. But since the perverseness of the opposite party hath induced them not only to break off from^c the root, and to reject the embraces and the bosom of their mother; but even to carry their quarrel to a much higher pitch, to get a bishop ordained, and to set up out of the church a spurious and^d opposite head to her, against all the rules which have been handed down to us, from the appointment of God, concerning catholick unity; upon the receipt of your letter, with that of our colleagues, and upon the arrival of *Pompeius* and *Stephanus*, men of undoubted credit, and our dear col-

^a Legitimate bishops and lovers of peace.] Here he strikes at the illegitimate and factious pretences of Novatian and his party.

^b Persuasives used in our letter.] This letter which our author sent by his colleagues, *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*, is not extant; but was, I suppose, that synodical letter, which is observed in the introduction to this epistle to have been lost.

^c The root.] The principle of ecclesiastical unity, was the bishop, from whom the dispensation of all ordinances flowed, as the nutritious juice of the branches doth from the root of a tree. The mother here is the church.

^d Opposite head to her.] It is otherwise enough apparent, that St. Cyprian here could not mean the sense of our modern Romanists, that their bishop was head of the catholick church, tho' he was the chief ecclesiastical officer of his own particular church, and in that sense head of it. And he was one of the heads of the universal church; as being a bishop of the first figure in it. But this whole argument is addressed to the bishop of Rome, as bishop only of a particular church.

legues, who have made us a full report of all your affairs, which we heard with great concern; we ^e directed our letters to you, according to the just and holy rules of the church, which we have received from God; and farther, ^f throughout our province, we have notified this whole affair to all our colleagues, and directed our brethren to procure letters likewise from them to you. Although indeed my own sentiments were sufficiently apparent to my brethren, and to all my people, upon my receipt of letters lately from both parties, when I gave yours the preference, and publicly notified to them your ordination to your bishoprick. And in regard to the common honour of our function, and to the dignity and sanctity of our episcopal character, I rejected the libel offered me from the other side, full of scandalous invectives against you; as considering, that in such a great and solemn assembly of our brethren, when the bishops of God were ^g sitting by his altar, such a libel as that was unfit to be read or heard. For indeed those things should not be rashly brought upon the publick stage, which are written with such personal animosity, and such acrimony of style, as may easily give scandal to the hearers, and divide our brethren, who live at a distance, and beyond sea, between two opinions; so that they will not be able to distinguish which side they should adhere to. Mean while, let them look to it, who, to promote their ambitious purposes, overlook the holy rules of the gospel, and delight in spreading stories which they cannot prove; who, because they cannot prevail to destroy and ruin an innocent character; content themselves to cast dirt upon it, and to blemish it with lyes of their own inventing.

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLV.

2. As to the bishops and their clergy; they should certainly make it their business to discountenance such invectives, when they find them published: For what will else become of what is written, and of what we teach to others; *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile?* And again; *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit; thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.* And farther from the apostle; *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth; but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* But now, in effect, we tell men, that these things may and ought to be done, when we suffer such invectives written by others to be read in our hearing. Wherefore, my dearest brother, when I found such things reported of you and your presbyters, ^h who sit with you, as favoured of a true gospel-simplicity, and were not intermixed with calumnies and invectives; I directed them to be read before my clergy and people. But tho' I had not then received an account from my colleagues, who were present at your ordination; I did not therefore forget our *antient* customs, nor fall into *novel* measures; for indeed it had been satisfactory enough to me, to have received the ⁱ usual letters from you singly, notifying your accession to your bishoprick; but that there was an opposite pretension started, which by lyes and slanders had a little disturbed the minds of our colleagues

§. 2.
That it becomes bishops and clergy-men to discountenance such scandalous rumours.
Psal. 34. 13.
Psal. 50. 19.
20.
Ephes. 4. 29.

^e Directed our letters to you.] Letters which were sent from one church to another, were directed to the bishop of the church they were sent to. So that when our author tells *Cornelius*, that they had directed their letters to him; he did, in effect, tell him, they acknowledged him as bishop of *Rome*.

^f Throughout our province.] So that St. Cyprian's authority was archi-episcopal; *Africa*, *Numidia*, and both the *Mauritania's*, being comprized in his province.

^g Sitting by his altar.] The president's throne in a provincial, or the bishop's in a diocesan council, was behind the altar; and the rest of his suffragans (or clergy) sat on his right and left in a semi-circle.

^h Who sit with you.] In the same diocesan consistory, as above described; and do not resort to *Novatian*, nor forsake you.

ⁱ Usual letters.] These were letters of communion sent by every bishop, upon his accession to the episcopal throne, to all the bishops in his reach, from them to be communicated to others, and so to procure their acknowledgments of him in that character. Where there was no dispute about the regularity of the election, these letters produced their desired acknowledgments from the bishops they were sent to; but where there was any controversy, the course was to suspend the answer to those letters, till due enquiry could be made. And thus communion was maintained between distant churches.

A. D. 251.
Epistle XLV.

§. 3.
He acquaints
Cornelius
with the ex-
communicati-
on of Felicif-
simus and his
partisans.

and brethren. Wherefore, to settle this discomposure, I judged it necessary to wait till your cause could be strengthened, and confirmed by the authority of my colleagues; who, by publishing their ample testimonies of your life and conversation, have taken away from your rivals, and from all such, as thro' the perverseness of their nature, or an itch of novelty, might be apt to join with them, all farther pretence of doubt or scruple: And now the minds of our brethren, which had been floating for some time upon uncertainties, are settled by this prudent method; and so, as I have advised them, they have all unanimously acknowledged your office and character. For there is nothing, my brother, which we are more concerned to take care of, than the preservation of that unity which is derived from our Lord, through his apostles, to us their successors; and the collection of his wandering sheep into his fold the Church, whom the obstinate and heretical faction of certain persons hath separated from their mother. As for those who shall think fit to persevere in their destructive obstinacy, and therefore will not return to us; let them alone continue out of the church; and let them remember, that they must account to our Lord for leaving her, and for making this rupture and separation.

3. As to the case of *Felicissimus*, and a ^k pretended consistory of certain presbyters; my ^l colleagues have sent a letter to you for your more certain information, subscribed with their own hands; and from thence you will have a clear account of their sentiments and determinations upon a full hearing. But I think, my brother, it will be best for you to give directions, that the copies of those letters, written by me, upon this occasion, to my clergy and people, which I lately sent by my colleagues *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*, as testimonies of my brotherly esteem and affection to you, should be read to our brethren with you, which will sufficiently clear up that whole transaction. For farther security, I have now sent again copies of the same, by *Mettius*, my subdeacon, and *Nicephorus*, my waiter, whom I have dispatched upon this message to you. My dearest brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

^k *Pretended consistory.*] This was of the five presbyters, who pretended themselves to be the proper presbytery of the church of *Carthage*; because they happened to be the majority, at that time, of her resident presbyters; the rest being dispersed in the heat of the persecution. But whilst their bishop continued a *capable person*, as not holding any heretical doctrine, and continued in communion with the episcopal college; the desertion even of all his presbyters would have been in *them* schismatical, and the people adhering to him would have been the *church*, which he might soon have replenished with *other presbyters*.

^l *Colleagues have sent a letter.*] This was a synodical letter of the bishops assembled at *Carthage*, which came better from them, than it would have come from our author singly, in a case so much his own.



A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIV.



EPISTLE XLVI.

Our author sent to Cornelius, by the same messengers who carried him the former letter, this letter to the confessors of Rome; which he left to his discretion, whether it should be delivered or not: For they had favoured the pretensions of Novatian; and it was by their direction, and under the shelter of their (assumed) authority, that he procured himself to be ordained bishop; so our author thought fit to remind them in this epistle of their duty, and to exhort them to return to the communion of the catholick church, which they had been the means and instruments of breaking.

Written after
his return.

CYPRIAN to Maximus and Nicostratus, and the other confessors,
sendeth greeting.

AS you have understood^a from divers of my letters, the esteem I have ever preserved for your *confession*, as well as the love which I have always professed to our *united* brethren; I beg you would believe and acquiesce in the tenour of these present; in which I plainly write my sentiments, and am truly solicitous for the honours due to your gallant behaviour. For I was beyond measure surprized, and even oppressed with an insupportable weight of sorrow; upon finding that^b you had consented to a thing so irregular, so utterly contrary to the methods of the church, to the laws of the gospel, and to the unity of catholick appointments, as the making another bishop; ^c *i. e.* indeed, what is neither just nor lawful, the forming another church; and consequently rending the members of Christ from each other, and forcibly tearing asunder the one soul and body of our Lord's flock, through emulous and rival pretensions. Wherefore I beseech you, put a stop, as far as you are able, to any farther continuance of this sinful breach among our brethren; consider the character of your confession, and the rules delivered to us from our Lord, and so return to your mother, whom you have forsaken, ^d and from whom you derived the honour of your confession, to her infinite satisfaction. Do not imagine, that 'tis possible for you thus to assert the gospel of Christ, whilst you separate your selves from his flock, and from that peace and mutual agreement which he hath established in it; whereas it would much more become you as soldiers, who

^a From divers of my letters.] So that our author intermeddled as much with the affairs of the Roman, as the Roman did with the African church. Neither the one nor the other did, however, intermeddle in any way of authority, but only in the way of a brotherly correspondence.

^b You had consented.] This is softly expressed; for indeed these confessors had done more. And Pacian (saith bishop Fell) hath charged upon them this whole transaction; that it was through a recommendatory letter from them, that Novatian procured those Italian bishops to ordain him.

^c *i. e.* indeed.] The making another bishop, irregularly, was making, we see, in our author's opinion, another church; so that one bishop, and one church, were terms correlative.

^d From whom you derived the honour.] Our author hath often said that the gospel made martyrs; so the honour which was gained through the gospel, must have been gained by observing, not by departing from, the gospel rules of unity, &c. And besides; adhering to the truths, which the church had committed to her custody, was the foundation of the martyrs honour, and indeed the very honour it self; so that their desertion of the church, was a forfeiture of that honour.

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLVI.

have behaved your selves gallantly in the day of battel, to sit down now within your camp in an orderly manner, and there to consult the common interest. For since it is granted, that our unity and concord ought not to be violated; and since ^c *we* cannot leave the church, or go forth from it to come over to *you*; we have nothing remaining to us, but intreating you by all the motives, which we can guess will have weight with you, to return to *our* brotherhood. My dear brethren, I always wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

^c *We cannot leave the church.*] It was agreed that the church was alone entitled to a federal salvation; to leave the bishop, who was regularly in possession, and a *capable* person, or to set up another against him, was to leave that particular church; and by all the rules of unity, which were ever known to those ages, that was leaving the catholick church.



Epist. XLVII.

EPISTLE XLVII.

Written after
his return.

The same Mettius, who, in company with Nicephorus, brought the 45th letter from our author to Cornelius, and the foregoing one to the confessors, had orders to read that which he brought to the confessors, to Cornelius, before he delivered it, and to take his directions about it: Which orders are signified in this short epistle, as concerning a matter which was to pass only between the two bishops of Rome and Carthage, without going any farther.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius sendeth greeting.

I Thought, it dear brother, incumbent upon *me*, and expedient for *you*, to write a short letter to those confessors with you, who have been seduced by the obstinate perverseness of *Novatian* and *Novatus*, and have departed from the church; in which I hoped I might persuade them, agreeably to that brotherly love which we owe each other, to return to the ^a *catholick church*. This letter I have given directions to *Mettius*, my subdeacon, to read to you before it be delivered; lest any one should pretend, that more or less is contained in it, than there really is. I have likewise ordered him to govern himself in this affair by your opinion; and if you shall advise the delivery of it, then, and not otherwise, to deliver it. My dear brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

^a *Catholick church.*] Any church, which was not tainted with heresy, or schism, had this title. And besides; by departing from any such *particular* society, it hath been observed in the preceding note, that any man would be judged to depart from the *catholick church*. So that the *Romanists* can hence start no *pretension*.

EPISTLE

A. D. 251.
Ep. XLVIII.



EPISTLE XLVIII.

As soon as the affair of Felicissimus and his five presbyters had received a synodical determination; the case of the lapsed came on, which was decided in a middle way, between the extremes of Novatian, who was against restoring them, upon any terms; and of Felicissimus, who was against imposing any terms upon them. The middle course was therefore taken, and they were neither made desperate, by an utter exclusion; nor presumptuous, by too easy an admission; but after due penance they were to be reconciled. An account of this determination was sent to Cornelius by our African synod. Mean while Primitivus, who had been sent in the month of July to Cornelius with the 44th epistle, was now in August returned to Carthage with a letter from him; the subject of which, tho' it be not extant, is apparent from this answer to it. He had complained, that Polycarp, bishop of Adrumettium, had written once to him, in quality of the Roman bishop, and so had acknowledged his character; but that now, after St. Cyprian's going into those parts, he had received a letter thence, inscribed only to the presbyters and deacons of Rome; which was a sort of disowning his character, and implied, that there was no legitimate bishop of Rome ordained. For if there had been any; all letters to any church were ever directed to the bishop of it. To all which our author, about the latter end of August, returns this answer.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius sendeth greeting.

I Have perused your letter, my dear brother, which you sent me, by *Primitivus*, our brother-presbyter; and I find by the tenour of it, that you are concerned to observe a change in the style and superscription of the letters which you have severally received from the *Adrumetine colony*; that whereas you had formerly received one in the name of *Polycarp*, directed to your self; now, since *Liberalis* and I went thither, there came a letter thence^b directed to your presbyters and deacons. This, I beseech you to believe, hath happened thro' no inconstancy, nor change of sentiments, nor yet with any design of diminution or affront to you. But the truth of the case was really this: When diverse of us bishops had agreed among our selves, in a common assembly, upon sending our colleagues *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus* to you, that we would leave this whole matter where we found it, and determine nothing in it, till they should return, and bring us a full account of their having adjusted

^a *Adrumetine colony.*] A town peopled from *Rome*, and therefore called a colony.

^b *Directed to your presbyters.*] This, it hath been observed, looked like disowning his character. And indeed *Novatian's* party had been so warm and zealous, in their aspersions upon *Cornelius*, and in setting forth the regularity of *Novatian's* ordination, that it startled many, and made them hold off from *Cornelius*, till that affair was particularly examined. As to the former acknowledgment of *Polycarp*; it was made by his church in his absence, probably whilst he was attending the synod at *Carthage*; for letters of communion, &c. which passed between church and church, always ran in the name of its bishop, tho' he happened, as in this case, to be absent at the time of writing them. So that any letter written to the presbyters and deacons of a church, implied it to have at that time no bishop canonically elected. Bishop *Fell*.

A. D. 251.
Ep. XLVIII.

all differences amongst you, or at least, should thoroughly acquaint us with the merits of the cause; the presbyters and deacons of the *Adrumetine colony*, in the absence of their bishop *Polycarp*, knew nothing of this agreement which we had made amongst our selves; but when, upon our arrival in those parts, they were made acquainted with it, they readily came into it, as others did; that so all our churches, in these parts, might act with a perfect unanimity.

§. 2.
Though some
endeavoured
to misrep-
resent our au-
thor, yet he
was heartily
in the interest
of Cornelius.

2. Yet there are divers people not a little troublesome with their reports and discourses, representing things very differently from the real truth of them: For I suffer none of our brethren to pass from hence to you, without a very particular charge from me, to acknowledge and abide by the ^c root and principle of the catholic church: But as my province is of a very wide extent, and hath ^d *Numidia* and the two *Mauritania's* joining to it; and as a schism in the chief city of it would have had a very ill tendency to confound the opinions of such as were not upon the spot to judge of it; we therefore determined to send ^e those bishops; and when, by their means, we should be in full possession of the truth, and thence enabled to procure the more authentick assent to your ordination; then to remove all scruple from every one's thoughts, and so to send you letters, in form, from the whole body of our bishops in these parts; (as is accordingly done) and thus all our colleagues would come into your communion, and firmly abide by the ^f unity and charity of the catholic church. All which, I think, hath happened very providentially; and I heartily rejoice at the success which hath attended these our measures; for now the legitimacy and honour of your episcopate are as clear as the sun at noon day, and stand supported by the most undeniable vouchers; and you have the regularity of your ordination in its rise and progress, as well as your own personal character publickly attested by the answers, sent to me from my colleagues in your parts, and from the several reports of *Pompeius* and *Stephanus*, *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*. And I doubt not but that God will vouchsafe to both of us, and to all our colleagues, a firm and steady administration of the trust committed to us; and that the unanimity of our practices and opinions will maintain and preserve the peace of the catholic church: That our Lord, who is pleased ^g to choose and appoint the bishops for his church, will farther be pleased to assist them when chosen and appointed by his favourable succours; inspiring them in the course of their government, and furnishing them with constancy and courage for repressing the presumptuous, as well as with mildness and lenity, for cherishing and encouraging the true repentance of the lapsed. My dearest brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

^c *Root and principle.* See notes [*Root, and, opposite head to her*] in epist. 45. What our author chiefly insisted on in examining, which was the *schismatical*, and which the *legitimate* pretension; was observing which did, or did not, proceed by the established rules of the church. The one he considered as adhering to the church, the *root*, the *mother*, or the *principle*, which gave nourishment to all the branches. The *Roman* church was a *matrix*, a *mother*, a *catholic* church: But then these titles belonged to others, to *Jerusalem*, and, indeed, to every church which claimed an apostle for her immediate founder. Whoever, in any controverted case, adhered to the bishop, who was first and regularly elected, and not afterwards deprived, adhered to the *root*; and did not, (as bishop *Fell* compares the case) like an extraneous scion, start besides it.

^d *Numidia and the two Mauritania's.* All the bishops of *Africa* seem to have paid a special deference to the see of *Carthage*, notwithstanding that each province had for its head a sort of archbishop, who was the bishop of the chief city in it; for our author's single province, as bishop of *Carthage*, extended no farther than the proper *Africa*, in its more restrained signification, which took in only the *Zengitana Regio*. *Mauritania* (saith *Pliny*) b. 5. c. 1. was divided by *C. Caesar* into two provinces, the *Casariensis*, and *Tingitana*; to which a 3^d part was added afterwards, viz. *Sitifensis*. Bp. *Fell*.

^e *Those bishops.* Viz. *Caldonius* and *Fortunatus*, who were sent express from *Africa* to *Rome* upon this occasion.

^f *Unity and charity of the catholic church.* The unity of the catholic church, and the bonds of charity were broken, by a rupture, with any part of it, as well as with the *Roman* episcopate; so that *Rome* can hence derive no peculiar claims.

^g *To choose and appoint.* What was done in this affair by human agency, if it were done agreeably to the rules of the gospel, was properly and truly imputed to our Lord himself, who established those rules.



EPISTLE XLIX.

Novatian had sent his legates, Maximus, Longinus and Machæus from Rome ^{Written after} to solicit his cause in Africa; but after having given some trouble there, ^{our author's} they were finally rejected. Cornelius, in the interim, held a council of ^{return.} about sixty bishops at Rome; which came into the same measures with the African synod, both as to the case of the lapsed, and as to the excommunicating Novatian. A copy of the African canons had been sent in the month of September to Cornelius, and in October he held his council. Novatian hence becoming desperate, sent Evaristus, a bishop of his party, into Africa, with Novatus, a presbyter of Carthage, and Nicostratus, a deacon, who had been a confessor, together with Primus and Dionysius; and as soon as they set out from Rome, Cornelius acquainted his brother Cyprian with their motions, by Augendus, a confessor; but the letter he sent upon this occasion is not extant. Mean while the confessors, who had joined with Novatian, began to be softened by the letters sent them, as well from the famous Dionysius of Alexandria (preserved by Eusebius, b. 6. c. 45.) as from our author; and especially by our author's tract of the unity of the church, which, in all probability, they had by this time read; and therefore they professed themselves sensible of their fault, and desirous of returning to the bosom of the church. Whereupon, in the month of November, Cornelius summoned a Diocesan council; at which, however, five bishops, who happened to be at Rome, were present; and there the confessors, Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius and Macarius, with their adherents, desired admission to the unity and communion of the catholic church. As for Nicostratus; (one of those to whom our author wrote his 46th epistle) he continued in his schism. The people all intimated their desires to have them received; and the clergy were for it; so that difference was adjusted, and they were admitted to communion. Whereof Cornelius immediately, by this letter, informed our author; and subjoined to it the several votes of the bishops and presbyters assembled with him; but these are lost.

Cornelius to his brother CYPRIAN sendeth greeting.



AS my concern and trouble were very great for those confessors, who were seduced by * that crafty designing knave, and almost perverted, and alienated from the church; so my joy was proportionable, and I gave thanks accordingly to Almighty God, and to Christ our Lord, upon their finding their error, and perceiving the fatal subtilty of that malicious person, which was equal to the old serpent's, and upon their coming over to the church, (from which they had departed,) as themselves profess, with singleness of heart. The first step to-

§. i.

* That crafty designing knave.] Viz. Novatian.

A. D. 251.
Epist. XLIX.

wards this, I had an account of from diverse brethren, of undoubted credit, lovers of peace, and exceedingly desirous that our church might be united; who reported to me, that a good deal of that spirit had spent it self; however I could not thence infer, with any assurance, that there was yet an entire change in them. But some time afterwards, the confessors *Urbanus* and *Sidonius* came to my presbyters, and acquainted them, that the confessor and presbyter *Maximus*, did much desire to return with them into the church; however, as they had engaged before this in diverse designs, which you have heard from me, and from diverse of my colleagues; we thought it best to receive the substance of their message from their own mouths, and their own confession, before credit should be given to it. Accordingly when they appeared, and were charged, by my presbyters, with their several practices, and more particularly with diverse letters sent of late up and down in their name, thro' all the churches, full of calumnies and invectives, which had given great disturbance; their answer was, that they were absolutely overreached, and knew not the contents of those letters; but thus much they acknowledged; that they had been misled into schismatical practices, and had been the ^b fomenters of heresy, in suffering hands to be laid upon him, (*Novatian*) as a bishop; and therefore, when these articles were pressed home upon them, they humbly begged, that they might be all forgotten, and that the memory of them might be utterly abolished. When this whole transaction ^c was laid before me, I determined to summon ^d a presbytery. There were also five bishops here, who attended likewise ^e this day; and so we took in the unanimous opinion of all, what was to be done, and how their persons were to be treated, that our determinations might have the greater weight. And for your more particular information of each persons sentiments, I have sent you their several votes, which you will ^f find subjoined to this letter. These transactions having passed, in the manner above related; *Maximus*, *Urbanus*, *Sidonius*, and *Macarius*, and most of our brethren, who had taken part with them, came into the consistory, earnestly intreating, that all former matters might be forgotten, and that mention might never more be made of them; and that henceforth they would behave as inoffensively, as if they had never done, or said, any thing amiss before; and would present to God a pure and clean heart; according to the direction of the gospel, which hath pronounced a *blessing upon the pure in heart; for that they shall see God.*

Matt. 5. 8.

§. 2.
A description
of the confessors
solemn
return.

2. What remained, was to ^g notify and recommend this whole transaction to our people; that they might see those henceforwards settled in the church, whom they had for a long time seen and lamented, as wandering and straying from it. Wherefore when the inclinations of these confessors to peace became publick; there was a mighty ^h concourse of our brethren thereupon;

^b Fomenters of heresy.] By dividing the unity of the church; for in no other respect could it be suggested against them, that they held any heretical doctrine; except perhaps this, that church-communion was not to be granted to the lapsed, even after penance. But here they acknowledge the charge of heresy, merely because they concurred towards constituting a bishop, over a church which was legally full, without any pretence of a deprivation.

^c Was laid before me.] Hitherto therefore all had passed more privately; but henceforwards the process commenced judicial.

^d A presbytery.] *Pamelius* hence would infer a peculiar privilege for the *Roman* clergy, (who are now called *cardinals*) of voting with bishops; because five bishops were accidentally there present. But in reality this was no more than a common *diocesan* council, consisting of the bishop and his presbyters; with whom the five bishops were joined for advice, as happening to be then at *Rome*.

^e This day.] So that this letter was dispatched just after a session of council.

^f Find subjoined.] These votes are lost; which is much to be lamented. For we should therein have had an early record of a *diocesan* council in our author's works; as we have of a *provincial*, in that of *Carthage*.

^g Notify and recommend.] *Omnis hic actus populo fuerat insinuandus.* The people therefore were not present at the council; but what passed there, was to be recommended to them for their approbation; their part in censures, having been already remarked elsewhere.

^h Concourse.] To the church, I suppose, at which these confessors were solemnly received.

who with one voice, accompanied with tears of joy, expressed their thankfulness to God; and embraced these confessors with as much transport, as if they had been just let out of prison; and that I may give you the sense of these confessors in their own words, take them as follows. "We (said they) acknowledge *Cornelius* as a bishop of the most holy catholic church; and as elected by Almighty God, and by Christ our Lord. We confess our error; and own the trick which hath been put upon us. We were imposed upon by artifice and cunning, and smooth words; and however we might appear in the eye of the world to have held some sort of communion with an heretical and schismatical person; yet in heart and purpose we were really always with the church. For we are not ignorant, that as there is one God, and one Christ our Lord, whom we have confessed, and one Holy Ghost; so there is of right but ¹ one bishop in a catholic church." And should we not be moved with such an acknowledgment, and give them thence the opportunity of finishing within the church the honour of that gallant confession, which they made before the powers of the world? Wherefore we ordered the presbyter *Maximus*, to resume his former place in the consistory; and received the rest to communion, with a prodigious applause and concurrence from all our brethren. The final determination of all we ^k left to Almighty God, to whose power every thing is subject. This account of our affairs we send you, dearest brother, in the very same hour and moment wherein they passed; and I have dispatched away *Nicephorus* your waiter, who was preparing to embark, directly from our ^l stationary assembly; that so you might forthwith put up your thanksgivings to Almighty God, and to Christ our Lord, as if you had, your self, been one of the clergy here with us. I have very good grounds to believe and hope, and almost to be certain, that the rest, who have been joined with this faction, will soon return into the church, now when they see their leaders taking part with us. I think, my dearest brother, you should send this letter to other churches about you; that all may know, how the tricks and wiles of this heretical and schismatical leader, daily come to nought. My dearest brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

ⁱ *One bishop in a catholic church.*] A catholic church, was any particular episcopal church; in which there was plainly, according to our author's principles, but one bishop, with diverse presbyters, and other inferior officers, and people. So that the *Roman* pretensions, as well as those of our anti-episcopal separatists, are equally hence precluded. See note [*one episcopal chair, &c.*] in §. 3. epist. 43. and note [*root and principle*] in §. 2. epist. 48.

^k *Left to God.*] The restoration to communion was an *external privilege*; but the *forum internum* (it hence should seem) they pretended no otherwise to meddle with, than by begging of God, the pardon of the delinquent. See note [*that I may beseech God for you*] in §. 15. of the *case of the lapsed*. And note [*we pretend not to anticipate*] in §. 10. of epist. 55.

^l *Stationary assembly.*] This was held twice a week, viz. on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, for solemn humiliation, as before hath been observed; and when the offices of worship were over, other business was dispatched. See this noted in epist. 44.



A. D. 251.
Epistle L.



EPISTLE L.

Written after our author's return. Cornelius seems to have added this short letter, by way of postscript to the former, with intent of apprizing our author, what sort of people was come to him from Novatian, especially Nicostratus and Evaristus.

Cornelius to his brother CYPRIAN, sendeth greeting.

TO fill up the measure of this wicked man's punishment, after he had been crushed by the ^a powers of God; and his agents, *Maximus Longinus*, and *Macheus*, had been rejected by you; he hath now recruited his forces, and risen again, as it were, from the dead: And, as I signified to you in a former letter, which I sent by the confessor *Augendus*; I suppose by this time, that *Nicostratus*, *Novatus*, *Evaristus*, and *Primus*, are arrived in your parts: Wherefore care should be taken, that all our brethren bishops may be apprized of *Nicostratus* his character and actions; that he hath been charged with many and various crimes; and particularly, that he hath not only cheated his secular patroness, whose affairs he managed, of a great part of her substance; but (what will ^b never be forgotten nor forgiven) hath also carried off several goods of the church, which were lodged in his hands, and committed to his trust. And as to *Evaristus*; they should moreover be acquainted, that he hath been the ring-leader of a schism, and hath trumpeted the people, over whom he presided, up to it; and therefore ^c *Zetus* is ordained bishop in his stead. He had formed much worse designs, and of greater consequence, than what he began to execute amongst his own people, agreeably to his insatiable malice and perverseness; from whence you may form an estimate, what leaders and abettors this vile heretick and schismatick hath always joined with him.

^a Powers of God.] *Viz.* the censures which were passed upon him, and were supposed to be ratified in heaven. See note [heretofore deserved it] in §. 3. ep. 43.

^b Never be forgiven.] As dooming him to a state of penance for life.

^c Zetus is ordained bishop in his stead.] It hath been already observed, in note [one episcopal chair] §. 3. epist. 43. that by forsaking the unity of the episcopal college, any single bishop became an incapable subject, contracted a moral incapacity, and was personally disqualified for the government of his flock. His flock, indeed, had no power to censure him; but when it was notified to them by the proper judges that their bishop was become incapable; they were to act upon the principle of self-preservation, and were to provide themselves with one capable. Now this *Evaristus* had disqualified himself by joining with *Novatian*, in his schismatical pretension, as having thereby broken the unity of the episcopal college. See note [are found consenting] in §. 2. ep. 67.



A. D. 251.
Epistle LI.



EPISTLE LI.

In the month of November, after a reign of about two years and six months; both the Decii (father and son) were lost together, as hath been before related, in the introduction to the case of the lapsed; and with their death, all remains of the persecution vanished entirely. In the month of December, our author having received the two preceding letters from Cornelius, by the hands of his waiter Nicephorus, answered them both: That concerning the reconciliation of the confessors in this; and that concerning Novatus, in the next epistle.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius, sendeth greeting.



Profess to you, my dearest brother, that we have given, and shall give thanks, without ceasing, to God the Father Almighty, and to his Christ our Lord, God, and Saviour; for such a measure of protection vouchsafed to his church, through his gracious providence, that her holiness and unity have not been quite destroyed, by the never-ceasing wiles of heretical pravity. For we have perused your letters, and are perfectly transported at observing from them the success of our common wishes, viz. That *Maximus* the presbyter, and *Urbanus*, both confessors; together with *Sidonius* and *Macarius*, are returned to the catholick church, have retracted their error, and got clear of their *schismatical*, nay indeed their *heretical perverseness*; and have been so wise as to consult their own safety by coming back to the^a house of truth, and by returning with honour, to the place and point^b from which they set out with so much honour: It had otherwise been a foul blot upon them, if they, who had confessed Christ, should afterwards have deserted his service; if they, whose courage and firmness had stood all trials, should afterwards have been foiled in any article of truth, or any law of charity: But now we may see with pleasure their glory untainted, and the dignity of their confession preserved entire and unblemished to them! They have separated themselves now from renegadoes and deserters, and have forsaken the betrayers of unity, and the assailters of the catholick church! Well might the clergy and people, and all your brotherhood receive them, as you say they did, upon their return, with all the expressions and tokens of joy imaginable! Inasmuch as when the confessors maintained their honours undiminished, and returned to unity, every man might well^c imagine himself a partaker with them in their glory. The transports of such a day, we can easily guess at, from what we felt our selves, upon that occasion: For if all our brethren here were exceedingly pleased with the news you sent us of these confessors, and received the message, import-

^a House of truth.] The church; called in 1 Tim. 3. 15. the pillar and ground of truth; not thence inferring any infallibility, but only asserting, that the truth was entrusted originally with the church, and therefore was not to be looked for out of her.

^b From which they set out.] Viz. the church, in which, and by which they became entitled to the honour of confessors.

^c Imagine himself a partaker.] Martyrs and confessors were honours to the church, which bred them; and in the publick honours of the body, each member might well imagine himself a partaker.

A. D. 251.
Epistle LI.

Luke 15. 7.

ing this common joy to them, with all possible marks of their satisfaction, and of the pleasure they took in it; what must we conceive the case to have been with *you*, who were eye-witnesses to the whole transaction? If our Lord hath told us in his gospel, that there shall be great *joy in heaven over one sinner, that repenteth*; how much greater must the joy be, both in earth and heaven, ^d over *confessors* returning, so much to their honour and credit, into the church of God, and opening a way for others to do so, by such a laudable example of their faith and practice? For in these parts some of our brethren were misled by this prejudice, that truly they adhered to ^e communion with the confessors. But now, with the removal of this prejudice, the light of truth hath shone in upon the minds of all, and it clearly appears, that the ^f catholic church is one, and cannot be separated, nor divided. Henceforwards there will be little danger of our people being over-reached by the fallacious pretences of any fanatical schismatick; when it hath appeared so plainly from this late example, that the faithful and gallant soldiers of Christ, cannot, by any one's artifice, or persuasion, be long kept out of his church. ^g My dearest brother, I always wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

^d Over confessors.] The force of the antithesis, turns upon *sinners*, in the former, and *confessors* in the latter part of the comparison. If there was joy for *sinners* returning; how much more, for men of such a character, as *confessors*?

^e Communion with the confessors.] Some confessors behaved not themselves so well as they should have done towards their bishop; but were engaged in schismatical designs against him. And their character was such, as misled diverse people to follow them. They thought they could not be unsafe in adhering to the communion of such persons as they were. To which prejudice therefore our author opposed that famous maxim in epist. 27. *That the gospel made martyrs, and not martyrs the gospel*; that they derived their honour from the church, and were not to turn her own arms against her.

^f Catholic church is one.] What the *universal church* was to *some* purposes, that any *particular church* was to *others*. The case of our author's church in *particular*, was the thing he was now speaking of; and of certain persons in it, who were so much prejudiced in favour of her confessors. So that the *catholic church* was here, as it often is with him, a *technical* term, signifying any *particular church* adhering to the rules of *catholic unity*.

^g My dearest brother.] *Cornelius* may be thought to have used this term to our author in the way of condescension; but when our author returns it to him, it carries all the marks of an uncontested equality between them, which can be defied. Doth any bishop now write in that strain to his holiness? He would soon be taught his distance if he did! Surely then, the notions which now obtain, as to the equality, or inequality, of bishops, must be different from what they were in the *Cyprianic* age.



A. D. 251.
Epistle LII.



EPISTLE LII.

This hath been observed already to have been written in answer to that postscript, as I termed it, in my introduction to it, which contained an account of Novatian's adherents. Here our author describes Novatus at large, who had been one of his presbyters, and was now a great supporter of Novatian, who was a presbyter of Rome, till he became a candidate for the bishoprick there. So that they were apparently two distinct persons, and as such are mentioned distinctly in this epistle.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius sendeth greeting.



YOU have acted, my dearest brother, very kindly, as well as very carefully, in dispatching away my waiter *Nicephorus* so early to me, with the joyful news of the confessors, and their glorious return into the church; and with full and farther instructions concerning the fresh and pestilent contrivances of *Novatus* and *Novatian* against her peace. For upon the day after the arrival of those pernicious hereticks from your parts, whose pravity is no less fatal to themselves, than to those who join them; *Nicephorus* overtook them, with the letter you were so kind to send hither. From which we understood, and have communicated the notice of it to others, that *Evaristus*, ^a from a bishop, is now not so much as in lay-communion; that having lost his episcopal dignity, and the relation he had to his people, and being banished out of Christ's church, he wanders up and down from province to province; and having made shipwreck of his own faith, is continually tampering with people of his own temper and disposition, to bring them into the like misfortune: And as to *Nicostatus*; you have been pleased to inform us, that he hath lost the administration of his ^b sacred diaconate, by his fraudulent and sacrilegious misapplication of the church's money to his own private use, and by his detrial of the widows and orphans pledges deposited with him; and therefore is not so properly fond of coming into *Africa*, as of running away from ^c the city, wherein he is conscious to himself of having committed such enormous crimes. And now, truly, this betrayer of, and renegado from, the church, (as if a change of the *soil* implied a change of the *man* too) shaild pass upon the world for a confessor, as he boasts himself to be; whereas ^d the character of Christ's confessor can never belong to any one, who hath denied the church of Christ.

^a From a bishop is now not so much as in lay-communion.] In crimes of a less heinous nature, which awarded the layman to a state of penance, the clergyman was only degraded to the condition of a layman; as we find it directed by the 24th apostolick canon. But in the case of simony, and crimes which were esteemed of the deepest dye, the clergyman was both degraded and excommunicated; as by the 29th and 30th apostolick canons.

^b Sacred diaconate.] The deacon's office, besides the part he bore in assisting the bishop, or presbyter, in the most solemn ministrations of divine worship, extended, in a most particular manner, to the care of the poor, and to the dispensation of the church's treasure.

^c The city.] Viz. Rome, called by way of eminence, the city.

^d The character of Christ's confessor.] For the ground of this assertion; see note [from whom you derived the honour] in epist. 46.

A. D. 251.
Epistle LII.
§. 2.

That he cannot be with Christ, who is not with the spouse of Christ.
Ephes. 5. 31,
32.

2. For since the apostle hath declared himself to the following purpose; *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and two shall be one flesh; this is a great mystery, but I speak as to Christ and his church:* Since the apostle, I say, hath thus declared himself; and born his testimony to the strictness of those bands and ligaments wherewith Christ is united to his church; how is it possible he should abide with Christ, who abides not with the spouse of Christ, and is not in his church? Or with what colour can he pretend to an interest in the reglement and government of the church, who hath defrauded the church of her property, and embezzled her treasure? And as to *Novatus*; there was no need of sending hither from your parts any intelligence concerning him, whose character might more properly be transmitted from us to you; as a person of insatiable and greedy avarice; of great conceit and haughtiness, without the least pretence or colour for it; known to the bishops here for no good, but standing condemned by them as an obstinate heretick, and a betrayer of the trust reposed in him: His flattery hath always a design in it of imposing upon the person 'tis addressed to; he is never so honest as to speak the truth out of love to any one; he is a very firebrand at kindling and enflaming contentions and disorders; or like a storm and tempest, for making shipwreck of the faith; a sworn enemy to the quiet of the church, and a professed disturber of peace and good government. Agreeably to what I have here described him, you may observe, that as soon as ever *Novatus* left you; that is, as soon as the storm and tempest blew over; a calm succeeded immediately, and you were in a great measure easy and settled; and the illustrious well-disposed confessors, who, at his instance and encouragement, departed from the church, as soon as ever he left the city, returned into her bosom. It is this very same *Novatus*, who sowed the first seeds of dissention and disturbance amongst us, and separated some of our brethren from their bishop; and, by shocking the minds of many here, in the midst of one persecution, raised another. It is he, who without my leave or knowledge, procured by his own intrigue and management, *Felicissimus*, his adherent, to be ordained his deacon; and sailing hence to *Rome*, carried with him the storm he had here been raising, and there endeavoured in like manner to subvert the church, by seducing a portion of the people from their clergy, and by breaking in upon that harmony and concord, wherewith the brethren there had hitherto been united to each other. In fine; as *Rome*, in regard to her greatness, ought to have the precedency of *Carthage*; his attempts and his crimes were greater at *Rome* than at *Carthage*: For there he took upon him to get a bishop made, according to his own mind and liking; who here presumed no farther than to procure the ordination of a deacon; and no one should wonder at this procedure in such men as he: For wicked men are perfectly overborn by the violence of their naughty passions; and after they have once committed an act of wickedness, their consciousness of it drives them on yet farther. Nor can they continue in the church of God, who neither in their actions nor dispositions in-

^c As to Christ.] In Christum, saith our author; so rendering the original, οὐ χωρὶς.

^f More properly.] *Novatus* being a presbyter of the church of *Carthage*.

^g Procured *Felicissimus*, &c.] Our author saith, *Diaconum suum constituit*; as soon after he saith, in the very same sense; *Qui istuc adversus ecclesiam diaconum fecerat, illic episcopum fecit*. Not that in either case he took upon him to ordain the bishop or the deacon; but as he procured *Novatian* to be ordained bishop of *Rome*, by three Italian Bishops, who happened to be there; so from the known principles and practices of those times, we must suppose, that he procured (as I translate it) *Felicissimus* to be ordained deacon; and that, without any farther process in irregularities, was presumption enough in him to deserve the censure under which he lay; since it was done without leave or knowledge of the bishop, whose participation was necessary in each ecclesiastical performance, according to the old *Ignatian* principles.

^h In regard to her greatness.] *Irenaeus*, b. 3. c. 3. had said to the same effect; in regard to her more powerful principality; and the council of *Chalcedon*; in regard to her being the seat of civil governments. *Rigaltius*.

cline to preserve that discipline of his church, ⁱ which hath so good a tendency to make them like himself. And indeed his depredations upon orphans and widows, and his withholding from the church her property and treasure, call loudly for that vengeance which we now see executed upon him, in the folly and fury of his present conduct. Add moreover to the foregoing crimes; that he suffered his father to die in the street for want of necessities, and took afterwards no care to bury him. He ^k kicked his wife upon the belly, when big with child, and as she was just ready to miscarry by the blow, the child was forced from her; and the father, thereby, became a murderer. Yet will this very man presume to condemn, without mercy, the *hands* which have been employed in heathen sacrifices; when his own *feet*, which killed his child in its birth, were really ^l more criminal. His consciousness of these crimes gave him, long since, very just apprehensions, that he should not only be degraded from his office of presbyter, but even prohibited ^m from lay-communion; and upon the urgent solicitation of our brethren, a near day was appointed for the cognizance of this affair; which would soon have had an hearing before us, if the persecution had not intervened and prevented it. This he received as the greatest good which could befall him, and the most agreeable to his wishes; since he gained by it an escape from the censure, which was otherwise sure to have befallen him: With this view he hath taken the opportunity to raise all these disturbances and commotions; and whereas he well knew that he had deserved a judicial expulsion out of the church, he hath anticipated that judgment of the bishops by a voluntary departure from it; as if the prevention of his sentence were really an escape from punishment. As to the rest of our brethren, who have been seduced by his craftiness and wiles; we lament their misfortune, and take all possible pains to draw them off from the party of that cunning knave; to get them safe out of his entanglements, to secure them against the influence of his solicitations, and to bring them back again into the church; from which, according to the rules of the gospel, he deserved a judicial expulsion. Of these we have good hope, that through the help and mercy of God, they may return into his church; since no one can finally perish, ⁿ of whom it is not evident, that he *was* to perish; our Lord having said in his gospel, *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* He therefore who is not planted in the precepts and lessons of God the Father, is the only person who can leave the church; the only person who can forsake the bishops, and continue in a desperate fellowship with hereticks and schismatics. As to all others; I cannot doubt, but that the mercies of God the Father, and the compassions of Christ our Lord, in conjunction with our own tenderness and forbearance towards them, will at length re-unite them to us. My dearest brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 251.
Epistle LII.

Matt. 15. 30.

ⁱ Which hath so good a tendency, &c.] Our author's word is *Deiſea Diſciplina*. He begins his book of the habit of virgins, with a large encomium of discipline, upon which the reader may be pleased to turn his eye, and then will not wonder to find it here entituled *Deiſea*.

^k Kicked his wife.] Presbyters, therefore, were at that time, permitted to marry.

^l More criminal.] This is a flight of rhetoric in our author, aggravating his adversary's crime; for otherwise, by the principles of the Cyprianick age, idolatry was a crime of the deepest dye, and stood foremost in the rank of the three great sins. Except we say with *Rigaltius* (which I think somewhat forced) that his *feet* were therefore more guilty, than the *hands* of the sacrificers, in regard to their carrying him out of the church, as well as being instrumental to the murder of his child, and so complicating the guilt of cruelty with that of schism.

^m From lay-communion.] See the first note in this epistle.

ⁿ Of whom it is not evident.] The sense of our author was this, and it was indeed his avowed principle; that none but men of corrupt hearts and wicked lives would finally abide in a state of schism; which, according to him, was a state of damnation; agreeably to that passage of St. John in his first epistle 2. c. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* And we read, in the gospel of the same author, our Saviour, promising; that if any man would do his will, he should know of the doctrine whether it were of God. John 7. 17. And Tertullian had before said, of a sentence of the church, that it was an anticipation of God's judgment; (*summum futuri judicii prajudicium*) so that the final continuance, of any under a censure of the church, was a moral evidence of their being to perish finally.

A. D. 251.
Epistle LIII.



EPISTLE LIII.

Written after
his return.

The confessors themselves, who had contributed to the rent in the church of Rome, upon their return to unity and peace, notify it to our author in this letter, which was written in the month of December, the same year with the preceding.

Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Macarius, to their brother
CYPRIAN send greeting.



WE are very confident, 'dearest brother, that you congratulate with us the measures we have taken, for consulting the peace and advantage of the church, before any private regards; and thereupon passing by all former transactions, and leaving them to the judgment of God; and so re-uniting our selves with our bishop, and all his clergy, to the great satisfaction of the whole church, and with the general affections of the people in our favour. All which we have thought fit to notify to you by this express. You have all our prayers, dear brother, for many years continuance in health and happiness.

[Dearest brother.] Confessors were always esteemed men of dignity in the church; so that they wrote to bishops in terms of less distance, and more familiarity, than others did.



A. D. 252.
Epistle LIV.

EPISTE LIV.

In the beginning of this year, our author wrote a congratulatory answer to the preceding letter of these confessors; in which he hath recommended to them the two tracts he had written and recited at Carthage, and now sent to Rome concerning the unity of the church, and the case of the lapsed. About the same time pope Cornelius wrote to Fabian, bishop of Antioch, an account of the posture his affairs were in at Rome, and how Novatian was now deserted by almost every body. A letter upon the same subject Cornelius also wrote to Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria. Eusebius hath preserved a notable fragment of the former, in b. 6. c. 43. and refers to the latter in b. 6. c. 46.

CYPRIAN to Maximus the presbyter, as likewise to Urbanus, Sidonius, and Macarius, sendeth greeting.

UPON reading the letter, my dearest brethren, which you sent to me, concerning your return to the peace and communion of the church, and your reconciliation with the rest of your brethren; I cannot but say, that the pleasure I took in such agreeable news, was equal to the joy I before conceived upon the honour you gained by your illustrious confession, and by the glorious success wherewith your spiritual conflicts were attended. For it is in a manner a new confession of your faith, and a fresh addition to your praises, thus to acknowledge ^a that the church is one; and is no partaker of foreign error, or, as it should rather indeed be called, of foreign pravity; to return to that camp, from whence ye so gallantly marched out to battel with your enemy, which ended so happily in conquest and triumph over him. Thence indeed it was fit ye should derive your trophies of victory, from whence ye were furnished with arms for the fight; and that the church of Christ should retain in her bosom those illustrious persons, whom Christ had so well prepared for glory. Ye have now accordingly observed a conduct agreeable to the vigour and purity of your faith, by maintaining the peace of our Lord, and of his church, and by a just regard to the rules of unity and charity; and hereby ye have also set an example to others of acting conformably to such a pattern; so that the true church, and the unity to which the gospel binds its members, which we have hitherto maintained, stand now acknowledged and confirmed by your suffrages, and are tyed fast with the bonds of your consent and approbation; and it cannot henceforwards be pretended, that the ^b confessors of Christ are the ringleaders of error, who, so much to

^a *That the church is one.*] Which they practically acknowledged, by returning to the communion of that one church; and thereby confessing their belief, that communicating with schismatics, was not communicating with the church. Thus far indeed both the schismatics and catholics were agreed, that the church was one; that each pretended to be that one, exclusive of the other. They did not imagine, that they could serve God acceptably, each in their own way, whilst the bands of unity between them were broken; but each charged upon the other, the guilt of that breach, and thence the imputation of schism, which was always understood to unchurch its abettors. And this confession we make in our creed, that there is *one catholic apostolick church*; which reduces, upon the matter, the business of *schism* to that of *heresy*. The manner wherein our author hath introduced this passage looks very much, as if the *unity of the church* had been, in his time, an article of faith.

^b *Confessors of Christ.*] It was a very plausible pretence and handle to the patrons of the schism, that they had men of such figure and character as confessors, to abet and countenance it. But now by the return of these confessors to the *unity of the church*, that pretence was cut off.

D. A. 251.
Epistle LV.

their commendation, had been foremost in the tract of honour and virtue. How much others may congratulate with you upon this occasion, or what secret triumphs and exultations they may feel in their own breasts, I pretend not to say; but for my own part I acknowledge, that I take to my self an uncommon share of joy upon your peaceable return to the laws of unity and charity; and I do most heartily felicitate you thereupon. For, to speak at once, with all plainness, my real sentiments; I was infinitely afflicted, that I could not hold communion with persons, for whom I had once begun to entertain such a cordial affection. And indeed the case seemed to me to be plainly this; that you left all your glory behind you in your prison, when upon your coming out of it, you suffered your selves to be entangled in the errors of heresy and schism. The honour of your character seemed, I say, to lag there behind you, when the soldiers of Christ returned not to his church, upon their being let out of prison, into which they had been thrown, with the praises and gratulations of his church attending them.

§. 2.
Though there
be tares in the
church, yet we
should not quit
it.

Matt. 13. 25.

2 Tim. 2. 20.

Psal. 2. 9.

John 13. 16.

2. For though *Tares* should appear in the church, yet that should give no scandal to our faith or charity; nor should we leave the church, because we observe them in it. Our business is to labour with all our might, that we our selves may be found true wheat; that so when the time shall come for gathering the wheat into our Lord's barns, we may reap the fruit of our honest endeavours. The apostle saith, in one of his epistles, that, *In a great house, there are not only vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.* We therefore should strive, as far as we are able, to become vessels of gold or silver; but, as to those of *earth*, we should remember, that *the breaking them belongeth only to our Lord*, who alone is entrusted with the *rod of iron*. The *servant* must not pretend to be *greater than his master*; nor ought any person to assume to himself a privilege, which the Father hath granted only to his Son; or imagine that he is fit or able to manage the spade or fan, or to purge the floor, or to separate all the tares from the wheat, by the power or sagacity of human judgment. 'Tis obstinate pride, and a presumptuous robbery of God, which makes men so rash and so assuming: And thus, whilst they arrogate more dominion to themselves, than the rules of equity will admit of, they fall away from the church, and so are lost; and, by blinding their own eyes with insolent and swelling claims, they miss, in the conclusion, the light of truth. Upon these considerations, joined with a due regard to the temper recommended by our Lord, and to the merciful forbearance of God the Father in his punishment of sin; after a long debate upon this subject, we agreed to observe the same temper, and to take the middle and milder course with offenders. All which ye will have an opportunity of discerning more particularly, upon reading the *tracts* which I lately recited in these parts, and have now transmitted copies of them to you, as a testimony of that mutual love which we ought to have for each other; and in them ye will observe, that there is *no want of due correction* to the lapsed, for their *reproof*; nor of *medicine*, for their *cure*. I have, moreover, as far as my small abilities enabled me, delineated and represented the unity of the catholick church; which *tract* I have the more reason to hope is acceptable to you, from your so reading what I have there written, as to approve, and transcribe it into your own practice; since you are now returned to unity and charity with the church. My dearest and most beloved brethren, I bid you heartily farewell.

* *The breaking of them.*] These confessors, the reader will remember, were somewhat inclined to the opinions of Novatian; and so were for excluding, finally, from communion, the more grievous sinners. And this opinion of theirs the present passage was designed to meet with.

† *Tracts.*] Viz. Concerning the *case of the lapsed*, and the *unity of the church*.

‡ *No want of due correction, &c.*] The penance to which they were assigned, was their correction; and their restoration to communion after it, was the completion of their *cure*; whereas the Novatians would have given them the *correction*, without perfecting their *cure*.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.



EPISTLE LV.

Soon after the schismatical ordination of Novatian; Antonian, a bishop of Numidia, wrote to our author, that he designed to communicate, not with Novatian, but with Cornelius: After which receiving a letter from Novatian, signifying to him, that Cornelius had admitted Trophimus, and other persons, to communion, who had been tainted with the guilt of offering sacrifice in the heathen worship; he began to stagger in his first purpose which he had declared to our author, and wrote a second time to him upon this subject. To both these letters, this epistle of our author's was sent in answer; wherein he is very copious, in the defence of his own, and of his colleagues proceedings; and in opening the whole case of the lapsed, and in proper reflections upon the conduct of Novatian: It appears plainly to have been written after the return of the confessors to the unity of the church, and after the first council which was held at Carthage upon this affair; and before the second, which was held in May following; so our most learned annalist assigns it to the month of February, A. D. 252.

CYPRIAN to his brother Antonian sendeth greeting.



Received your letter, my dearest brother, which spoke your firm maintaining the unity and good agreement of the sacerdotal college, and your adhering to the catholick church; since therein you intimated to me your intentions not to communicate with Novatian, but rather to tread in my steps, and to agree, in all points, with our brother-bishop Cornelius. You likewise signified your desires to me, that I would transmit a copy of your letter, to our colleague Cornelius; that he might thence be induced to lay aside all suspicions; and to rest assured, of your resolution to communicate with him, that is, indeed, with the catholick church. But since your former, I have received a second letter from you, dispatched to me by our brother-presbyter Quintus; from which I could not but observe, that you were shaken in your former purposes by Novatian's letter. For after you had seemed fully determined in your resolutions to agree with Cornelius; in your last, you desire I would write you word, what heresy Novatian had been author of, or how it came to pass that Cornelius communicated with Trophimus and the sacrificers. Now if this scruple arises from a true concern for the honour of our religion, and you would only desire more light in a doubtful question; such an holy solicitude, proceeding from a devout affection, and from the fear of God, is no way culpable. But since I observe, that after a full declaration of your sentiments in your first letter

§. 1.

[Unity and good agreement, &c.] Our author in his book of the unity of the church, §. 4. as likewise in the sequel of this epistle declares, that the episcopate is one. And here in like manner, he speaks to the unity of the sacerdotal college. Bp. Fell.

[What heresy.] This was Novatian's pretence, that he differed not in any point of doctrine from the catholick church; but only in a matter of discipline, wherein he had the concurrence of former usage on his side: Since the first solemn determination concerning the re-admission of the lapsed to communion, seems to have been made after the Decian persecution.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.
Matt. 7. 24.

to me, you were shocked upon the receipt of *Novatian's* to you; you must give me leave, dear brother, to lay down this as a rule in the first place; that men of true firmness, who once are strongly founded upon a rock, are not easily removed from it, even by a mighty wind or tempest, and much less by every light blast of air; such fickleness and inconstancy would expose them to be tossed to and fro with every wind of opinion, and would represent them guilty of the most shameful levity, in departing from their purposes upon any slight occasion. And that *Novatian's* letters may have no such effect upon you, my brother, or any one else; I will give you the best account I can of that whole transaction, with all convenient brevity.

§. 2.
The objection
in the first
place answer-
ed, concerning
the various
treatment of
the lapsed.

2. First then; since my conduct seems to have given you some umbrage; I shall begin with a defence of my own cause and person; that no one may think, I have, upon slight or desultory reasons, departed from my first intentions; or whereas, at the beginning of this dispute, I insisted much upon a strict adherence to the discipline of the gospel, I seem now a friend to milder counsels, and more inclined to relax the severity of my former sentiments; so as even to throw open the peace of the church to such, as have either polluted their consciences with ^c tickets or certificates, or else have actually joined in the dreadful sacrifices of the heathens. Both these points were weighed with great deliberation, before I determined to pursue the one, or the other: For during the continuance of the conflict, in the midst of the persecution, whilst the struggle was warm, and the battle in its height; it was proper, that the soldiers, engaged in it, should be excited and quickened by all possible encouragements; and more particularly fit, that the *lapsed* should have, as it were, a charge sounded to them, by my reproofs and exhortations, not only to follow the tract of repentance by prayers and lamentations; but (since the opportunity still was open to them, for re-entering the lists, and repairing their honour, and recovering their lost advantages) to press farther forwards to the glory of confessing Christ's name, and even of suffering martyrdom for his sake. In fine, when my presbyters and deacons ^d had written to me upon the case of certain persons, who were impatient of all delay, and hastened, with great precipitancy, to communion; I wrote back to them, in a letter which is now extant, to the ^e following purpose: [*If they are in earnest, so impatient for a return to the church, which they have so shamefully forsaken; the way is open to them, and the season such, as will give them a fair opportunity of obtaining all they ask for. The battle is not yet over, and there are still encounters enough remaining to approve the courage of any, who yet would list in the service; if they are truly sorry for, and ashamed of, their past cowardice, and would atone for it by the ardor and gallantry of some after-practice; they, who cannot wait for a regular restoration to the peace of the church, may then anticipate it by the martyr's crown.*] Yet I put off any decisive determination upon the case of the *lapsed*, till the church, her self, should be restored to peace, and till an opportunity should be open to the bishops for meeting together, thro' the mercies of God, in some common council; where, upon due deliberation and concert, this affair might be finally determined: Mean while I gave directions, that, if any should presume to communicate with the *lapsed*, before such council held, and some sentence given in it; they should, themselves, be deprived of communion. And this my opinion I wrote at large ^f to the clergy of *Rome*, who at that time were without a bishop; as likewise ^g to the confessors *Maximus* the presbyter, and others, then in custody; and the

^c Tickets or certificates.] See note [scandalous subscriptions] in §. 3. epistle 30.

^d Had written to me.] This letter, it is observed in the introduction to the 19th epistle, is not extant.

^e Following purpose.] The following words are in the 19th epistle; and the reader may please to cast his eye backwards, and see them there noted.

^f To the clergy of Rome.] Viz. in epistle 27.

^g To the confessors.] Viz. in epistle 28.

tenour of my letter to them you may easily gather from their answer to me; which runs thus: [*Altho' we are in truth of your opinion, in this important affair, that the peace of the church her self should be waited for, before any thing be concluded in it; and then we may at large debate the case of the lapsed, in a full assembly of bishops, presbyters, deacons, confessors, and such of the laity as have stood their ground in the time of danger.*] They added moreover by the hand of *Novatian*, who was for that time their scribe, and it was subscribed by the presbyter *Moses*, then a confessor, and now a martyr; that the peace of the church should be granted to such of the lapsed as were sick and in danger of death: ^b Which letter was dispersed throughout the christian world; and the contents of it were communicated to the several churches, and their members.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

3. Yet according to our former purpose, as soon as ever the heat of the persecution was abated, and an opportunity thence given us for meeting together in a common council; a very considerable number of us bishops, whose lives, and whose integrity, the merciful protection of God had preserved inviolate, met, as we had determined; and, having taken in what light we could from the holy scriptures as to both sides of the question, we came at last to a middle resolution; so as not utterly to cut off from the lapsed all hope of peace and communion; lest despair should tempt them to grow worse; and, when they found themselves shut out of the church, they should return to a mere secular life, and follow the heathen practices; nor yet, on the other hand, to weaken the discipline of the gospel, by admitting them to rush too hastily upon communion; but that their penance should be drawn out to a considerable length, and the mercies of God be supplicated with great mournfulness and sorrow, and the cases of the several supplicants be especially looked into, with their respective exigencies and dispositions; according to the tenour of ^c a tract written by me upon this subject; which I hope is come to your hands, and in which are contained the heads of each direction which hath been given upon this occasion.

§. 3.
That upon the persecution ceasing, a synod was held at Carthage, concerning the case of the lapsed.

4. And lest the number of bishops in *Africa* should be thought too small for deciding this question; we wrote upon it to our colleague *Cornelius*; who, ^k in a council, wherein many of our fellow-bishops were assembled, came to the same moderate and wholsom resolution which we had before taken. Concerning which I have held it now expedient to write to you also; and to inform you, that I did nothing inconsiderately, nor upon slight reasons; but, as I have hinted before in diverse letters, reserved every thing entire to the determination of the council, which I purposed to call together with the soonest; and in the mean time admitted none of the lapsed to communion; whilst any opportunity remained open to them for obtaining, ^l I say, not the pardon of their sin, but, the martyr's crown. Afterwards, indeed, I came into measures somewhat different; as the ^m good agreement and understanding of our episcopal college, the consideration of healing our wounds and breaches, and of gathering together the scattered remains of our brethren, seemed to require; and accordingly I gave way to the pressing exigence of

§. 4.
What was determined upon this case in Africa, was moreover guarded with the concurrence of the Roman church.

^b Which letter was dispersed.] From this, as well as from diverse other passages, in our author's epistles, the reader will observe, the harmony and good correspondence, which obtained among the different districts of the antient church. How the episcopate was considered as single, in which each bishop had a share and interest; confined, for the sake of order, more especially to some one district, yet not excluding an occasional concern for the whole, upon certain emergencies.

^c A tract.] Viz. concerning the case of the lapsed.

^k In a council.] Mentioned by *Eusebius*, b. 6. c. 43. Bishop *Fell*.

^l I say not the pardon of their sin.] Our author suggested a nobler view to the lapsed, than obtaining, thro' penance, the pardon of their sin; he rose higher in his management with them, and pointed to them, whilst the persecution yet raged, and the opportunity thence was open for it, the attainment of martyrdom.

^m Good agreement and understanding of our episcopal college.] That what had once been determined in a council of bishops should by no particular bishop be rescinded; which would have been contrary to that good agreement. So our author here defends his conduct by the authority of the council.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.

the conjuncture, consulted the interest of those many who were concerned in this unhappy business, and do not yet think it proper to depart from those measures, which were once settled in the council by common consent; altho' I am not insensible, what rumours are spread abroad upon my conduct; and how many lyes are forged upon the devil's anvil against the priests of God, to break, if possible, the peace and unity of the catholick church. It will become your character, as a kind brother, and a peaceable fellow-bishop, not too easily to hearken to the malicious suggestions of apostates; but rather to consider the conduct of your colleagues, men of sober and modest demeanour; and to take your estimate of it from the whole tenour of their lives and manners.

§. 5.
The praises of
Cornelius.

5. And now, my dear brother, I proceed to the personal character of our colleague *Cornelius*; of whom you will take with us the truest estimate, if you hearken not to the scandalous and false reports of malicious detractors; but rather to the ^a choice and approbation of our Lord God, who made him a bishop; and to the testimony of our fellow-bishops, who have, all, throughout the world, unanimously acknowledged his election. For that indeed which most particularly redounds to the honour of our brother *Cornelius*, and makes him most acceptable to God and Christ, and to his church, and to all our fellow-bishops, is, that he was not advanced ^b on the sudden to the episcopal dignity, but went thro' all the ^c previous offices of the church; and, after having served our Lord in all of them with his gracious acceptance, he ascended at last, by regular and proper steps, to the sublimest point of the christian priesthood. In the next place, he neither desired nor canvassed for the dignity conferred on him; much less did he invade it, ^d as some others would, who are acted by a great and lofty conceit of their own qualifications; but peaceably and modestly, like such as are called by God to this office, agreeably to his unblemished character, and to his natural humility, which he hath all along maintained and preserved without change or mixture, instead of using violence, as a certain person in this case hath done to be made a bishop, he suffered violence, and was raised to his dignity by force and compulsion. Accordingly he was ordained a bishop by ^e diverse of our colleagues, who happened at that time to be at *Rome*; and soon after wrote letters hither, bearing very honourable testimony to his character, and setting forth the regularity of his ordination. *Cornelius*, then, was advanced to the episcopal chair, by the choice and approbation of God and his Christ; by the unanimous ^f testimony of almost all the clergy, by the concurring suffrages of the laity then present, and by the college of those ancient and worthy bishops who were upon the spot; when no one was ordained before him; when the see of

^a *Choice and approbation of our Lord.* He was duly and canonically elected and ordained, and the act of the church in so electing and ordaining him was supposed to be ratified by God and Christ; what this regular election was, we are informed by what follows in this §. note [*testimony of the clergy.*]

^b *On the sudden.* The usual steps, were; passing through all the orders of the clergy, and staying for some time with approbation in each of them: And the most distinguished merit seldom enabled any man who was promoted *per saltum*, to get over the prejudice conceived against him for such an irregular advancement. This it was which gave our author's five presbyters such an handle against him; and though his extraordinary attainments enabled him to shift tolerably; yet every thing had certainly been more smooth and easy to him, if he had not lain open to that objection.

^c *Previous offices.* What these were, see note [*the subdeacon*] in epist. 8. §. 1.

^d *As some others.* Here our author strikes at *Novatian*; who, though not regularly elected, caused himself to be ordained bishop, and so invaded an office to which he was not duly called; he again more plainly glances at him in the words which presently follow [*as a certain person in this case hath done.*]

^e *Diverse of our colleagues.* Sixteen in number, and of these, two *African* bishops, viz. *Pompianus* and *Stephanus*; whereas *Novatian* was ordained clandestinely, in the night, by three *Italian* bishops, of very scurvy characters, without a regular election. Bp. Fell.

^f *Testimony of the clergy, &c.* Our author is here mentioning the whole complex act of all the parties concerned in making *Cornelius* bishop. The clergy's and people's testimony to his character, and choice of his person; and then the finishing act, which was ordaining and consecrating him bishop, by the college of bishops, who were then at *Rome*. See note preceding in this §. [*choice and approbation of our Lord.*]

Fabian

Fabian, that is indeed the see of *Peter*, and the episcopal chair was vacant; which, therefore, being filled, agreeably to the will of God, and confirmed by the unanimous concurrence of us all; whoever thenceforwards would be ordained to it, must be ordained out of the church; nor is he capable indeed of receiving ordination from the church, who maintains not the unity of the church: Be that person who he will, and let him boast, as much as he pleases, of his own merits and qualifications; I make no scruple to pronounce him a profane person, an alien, and one who hath no part nor lot in the privileges of the church. And since, when one is once regularly ordained, there can be no other after him; whoever pretends to any such ordination, after his, who alone is entitled to it, doth not only forfeit his claim to the effects of such a second, but, indeed, of any ordination; and the whole action is really a perfect nullity. Yet farther; when *Cornelius* was thus without his own seeking, and without any force used by him; ordained a bishop; and when he had accepted the office thus conferred on him, by the will and providence of God; how gloriously did he behave in it? With what courage and steadfastness, and firm adherence to the christian faith? All which deserved from us our particular notice, as well as our most sincere and cordial commendations; that, in a time so perilous, he should preside at *Rome* in the episcopal chair, with intrepidity; when a tyrant and declared enemy to the priests of God, threatened every thing which was barbarous and terrible; and was so incensed against them, that he could have born, with more patience, the news of a rival Emperor, set up in opposition to him, than of the ordination of a *Roman* bishop. Doth not such a man as this, dear brother, deserve all possible applauses for his faith and courage? Should he not be ranked amongst the most illustrious martyrs and confessors, who continued so long under the expectation of tormentors, and savage executioners from the enraged tyrant, to mangle his body; to behead, or to crucify, or to burn, or perhaps, with some new and unexampled invention of malice and cruelty, to tear and torture the limbs and bowels of this brave *Cornelius*, opposing those dreadful edicts; and, through the mighty power of his faith, despising the torments wherewith he was threatened? And, though the power and goodness of God have hitherto protected his bishop, when ordained, whom it was his will to have ordained; yet *Cornelius* gave sufficient evidence of his fear of God, and his attachment to his master's service, by suffering all he could suffer; and by taking the episcopal charge, conquering the tyrant first, who was soon after conquered in battle.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.

6. As to those ill-natured and scandalous reports which are spread about concerning him, you should not wonder at them; since you know it is an old resort and practice of the devil's, to wound the character of God's servants with calumnies, and to soil its lustre, by venting and promoting mistaken notions of it. So that they, whose consciences are as clear as the mid-

§. 6.

That the reports of *Cornelius* being a certificate-man, and communicating with such as had sacrificed in heathen

* Confirmed by the unanimous concurrence.] The acknowledgement of any bishop by the episcopal, or sacerdotal college, signified by letters of communion, was a rule in litigated cases, whereby the people were to judge who was their proper bishop. See note [Zetus ordained bishop in his stead] in epist. 50.

† When one is regularly.] These words need no other comment, than a bare recommendation of them to the reader's peculiar notice; as what will give him a just idea of those ancient principles of church-unity, which obtained in our author's time.

‡ A perfect nullity.] When a see was canonically full, no one could enter upon it without the character of an intruder, except the occupant were validly deprived; and all the pretensions of such an intruder must have signified nothing.

§ In a time so perilous.] *Viz.* The Decian persecution.

¶ Martyrs and confessors.] Our author opposes this to the pretence of martyrs and confessors being on the other side, which had gained much upon *Antonian*. *Cornelius* himself (our author insists) was equal to the best of them, even upon that account, which they could with most reason boast of, and in all other respects superior to them.

‡ A certificate-man.] See note [scandalous subscriptions] in §. 3. epist. 30. what was the use and importance of these certificates.

day,

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

day light, find their light eclipsed and darken'd by such disadvantageous rumours. You are therefore to understand, that I have sifted the truth of his case, as exactly as I could, out of my colleagues; and am perfectly satisfied, that he is not tainted, as some would represent him, with the guilt of any certificate; nor hath he promiscuously joined in ^b sacrilegious communion with those bishops, who have sacrificed at the heathen worship; but hath only re-joined those to the body of the church, who, upon hearing their cause, were found innocent. For as to *Trophimus*, of whom you want a particular account; his case hath been mightily misrepresented to you, by the partiality and disaffection of those who have related it: Since, in reality, our dear brother *Cornelius* hath done no more than diverse of our predecessors have done before him, upon a like occasion, of uniting and gathering their flock together; *i. e.* he gave way to the pressing exigence of times and circumstances; and, since *Trophimus* had carried off a great number of the people with him; upon his return into the church, and giving satisfaction for the offence committed by him, and confessing his former error with all humility, and submitting to a state of penance for it; and at the same time bringing back with him those brethren whom he had so lately misled, and obtaining from them the like submissions; his request was heard; tho' it was not so properly the person of *Trophimus*, as a very great number of the brethren with him, which was re-admitted into our Lord's church; all which would never have been prevailed upon to return into it, if *Trophimus* had not come along with them. Wherefore after a mature debate of this matter with diverse of our colleagues, who were there upon the spot, *Trophimus* was at length received; whose crime was amply attoned for, by the return of so many brethren with him, and by their being thence restored to a state of salvation: Yet was *Trophimus* received at last upon no better terms, than those of ^c lay-communion; and not, as the letters of certain ill-willers have reported to you, to his former station of a presbyter: And as to what is reported to you of *Cornelius's* promiscuously communicating with those who have sacrificed at the heathen worship; this is a fiction (like the rest) of ^d apostate schismatics. For they who depart from us, can never commend us; nor ought we to wait till we can hope to please them, who regard not our pleasure, but rebel against the church; and labour, by all the means in their power, to seduce our brethren, and persuade them to revolt from her. Wherefore, my dearest brother, I beg you would not too easily hearken to any sinister reports, of *Cornelius*, or myself, nor give the least credit to them.

§. 7.
That the lapsed ought to have relief in danger of death, and yet that there was a difference in their respective cases.

7. For as to the case of persons seized with sickness; we do indeed administer relief to them in the time of danger, agreeably to the resolution we took upon the treatment of people in their circumstances; but then after we have administer'd this relief, and the peace of the church is restored to them, in the time of their extreme danger; certainly you would not have us choak, or stifle, or use violence towards them, to bring them to their end; ^e as if it were absolutely necessary for such persons to dye, as soon as they have received

^a My colleagues.] *i. e.* Those bishops who were sent from Carthage to Rome, upon this enquiry; as well as to examine the merits of the cause, between *Novatian* and *Cornelius*; that they of *Africa* might know to whom they were to direct their letters of communion.

^b Sacrilegious communion.] As robbing the church of her power of the keys; which (as bishop *Fell* observes) would be utterly insignificant, if they, who in one place were excommunicated for so foul a fact as these bishops had been guilty of, should be in any other place admitted to communion.

^c Lay communion.] What the church of *Rome* would now call *lay-communion*, is receiving under one species only. But *Rigaltius* hath well observed, that the *lay-communion* of the antients, was, when a bishop, presbyter, or deacon, apostatized, and afterwards, upon his solemn repentance, was restored to communion; *i. e.* to a participation of the holy eucharist with the rest of the faithful; but not re-admitted to the privilege of his order, only communicating as other lay-men did.

^d Apostate schismatics.] Our author's word is only *apostates*: But I presume he must design by those words, the persons, who took part with *Novatian* in his schism, and forsook the church.

^e As if it were absolutely necessary.] *Antonian* (it hence should seem) had objected to the practice of the church, in admitting these persons to clinical communion; that they often survived, and so the suggestion

received the peace of the church, because we do indeed give it to them upon a supposal, that they are in great and imminent danger of death; whereas the conclusion hence should rather be; that God doth hereby give proof and evidence of his favourable disposition, and fatherly affection, towards them; and so, as they received with the peace of the church a pledge of life; they have here their lives continued and prolonged to them, after their receiving it. Wherefore, after a resolution once taken to assist our brethren in cases of extreme danger, no one should impute it as a fault to the bishops, if a reprieve is granted by God to our brethren, after their restoration to the peace of the church: And at last, dear brother, I hope you will not judge, as some do, that the case of persons, receiving, or signing, certificates or tickets, is perfectly the same with that of sacrificers; since among those very sacrificers, there is often great diversity of circumstance, and thence of guilt. For certainly we should not equal the case of him, who advanced, of his own accord, to that horrible work, with his, who withstood the temptation long, struggled a great while with it, and at length was forced to yield, thro' mere necessity and compulsion; the guilt is surely very different, which induces a man to betray both himself, and all his family; and that, which exposes his own person only to the danger, thereby protecting his wife, and children, and family, from it: He who died in his friends and the natives of the place he belongs to, to this dreadful wickedness, should, in all reason, be distinguished from him, who spared them, who, perhaps, received into a place of safety diverse of our brethren in their flight and banishment, and thence is enabled to present before God many souls alive and unpolluted, to intercede with him for *one*, which is tainted and wounded.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

8. Wherefore since among the persons who have proceeded so far, as even to join with heathens in their sacrifices, there is a great diversity of circumstance; how severe and uncharitable must the censure be, which would equal the case of such, as have only procured tickets, with them? Whereas the procurer of tickets may say for himself, "I was fully convinced, as well from the holy scriptures, as from my bishop's exhortations, that I ought not to sacrifice to idols, and that a servant of God should not worship images. Wherefore to avoid the doing an unlawful action, (when an opportunity was fairly offered me for procuring a ticket, which I would not have accepted, if it had not been fairly offered me,) I either went to the magistrate in person, or else directed another to go in my stead, and to acknowledge, that I was a christian; that I held it unlawful to sacrifice; that I could not approach the altars of the devil; and therefore was ready to give such a sum, that I might not be forced upon doing what I thought unlawful." Yet he who is only thus far tardy, upon being informed by us, that his conscience is defiled, and that he ought not to have gone this length, although his hands are not corrupted, nor hath his mouth been polluted with tasting that deadly food; (I say, upon hearing this from us, he) weeps and laments, and is convinced, that he hath offended; and tho' he hath been rather in an

6. 8.
That the case of the certificate-men hath great alleviations.

suggestion, that they were admitted to it upon their death-beds, and only in cases of the last extremity, did often not prove true: To which our author here answers, That surely in order to prove the truth of that suggestion, Antiochian would not advise that, such persons should be killed, or made away with, as soon as they had received the peace of the church; that what the church did, she did upon great appearances of danger, and she could not know the certainty of what might afterwards happen; but if they survived, it should rather be construed as a token of God's approbation of what had been done in their favour, than be made an objection against it. And after all, if they survived, they were held to a state of penance; and so all discipline was not in their case relaxed. Bishop Fell.

¹ Pledge of life.] Viz. of an happy immortality, which their restoration to the peace of the church promised to them.

² Certificates or tickets.] See note [scandalous subscriptions] in §. 9. epist. 30. already referred to in §. 2. of this epistle; as likewise [wounded himself the devil] in §. 14. of the *case of the ticketed*.

³ An opportunity was fairly offered.] Viz. by the covetousness, or, perhaps, the good nature, of the judge; saith Rigaltius.

⁴ Deadly food.] Viz. of the heathen sacrifices.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.

Luke 15. 4.

1 Cor. 10. 33.

1 Cor. 11. 1.

1 Cor. 9. 22.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

§. 9.

That Novatian was formerly a Stoick and introduced the tenets of his philosophy into the church.

Coloss. 2. 2.

Numb. 12. 3.

Luke 6. 36.

Matt. 9. 12.

error, than a *crime*, he shews ^k what he would be for the future upon any like occasion. If therefore we should not accept the penance of people in this circumstance, where there is so good an appearance of their meaning tolerably well; there would be great danger of their following the devil's invitation, and of their falling into heresy, or schism, with all their families, which perhaps thro' their means have been kept untainted; and it will be imputed to us in the day of judgment, that without curing the wounded sheep, we have lost diverse which were safe and untouched, ^l for the sake of one wounded; and whereas our Lord represents himself in the gospel, as seeking the *lost sheep*, which lagged behind thro' weariness; and as bringing it back, when he had found it, upon his shoulders; we, at this rate of management shall be charged as not only *not seeking* our lapsed brethren, but as even *driving* them away from us; and as giving an opportunity to those dogs and wolves, those false prophets and teachers, for obtaining their purposes, who desist not from rending and tearing the flock of Christ, where-ever they can come at it; and so in the event, we shall be found destroying those by our rigour and severity, whom the hardships of the persecution have not carried off. And what will then become, dear brother, of that apostolick saying; *I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* And again; *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak.* And once more; *Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member rejoice, all the members rejoice with it.*

9. Those philosophers, dear brother, who are called *Stoicks*, compute, indeed, quite otherwise, and hold all sins to be equal, and that a man of wisdom and constancy should never suffer himself to be gained upon; but there is a great deal of difference between philosophers and christians; and since the apostle hath bid us *beware, lest any man should spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit*; we should, I think, avoid those measures, which, instead of imitating the divine mercy, are the mere results of arrogant and rigid philosophy. We find it said of *Moses* in holy writ, that he *was very meek*. And our Lord in his gospel gave out this lesson; *Be ye merciful, even as your Father also is merciful.* And again we read him saying; *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* But now what kind of art would be thought exercised by that physician, who should proclaim of himself; *I cure none but those who are whole, who have in truth no need of a physician?* Whereas, indeed, we should extend our assistance, and give out our medicines to such as are sick and wounded! Nor should we account of those as dead, whom we see lying down of the wounds received in the fatal persecution; but as *half-dead* only: [^m and therefore not quite desperate] For if they were *quite* dead, ⁿ none of them could afterwards become confessors or martyrs; but since there is a principle of life remaining in them, which, with the help of penance, may possibly restore them to their former health; therefore we try that remedy to awaken their faith and virtue, and to put them upon exerting their utmost strength; which strength could never be exerted

^k What he would be for the future.] i. e. By his sorrow for what is past, he gives us a proof, that if he were to be at any time hereafter in the same circumstances, he would not contract any like guilt; would not pollute his conscience with these tickets.

^l For the sake of one wounded.] This is an allusion to the case of the *lost sheep*, in Luke 15. 4. only our author puts *wounded* for *lost*. The man there represented in the gospel, brought back the *lost sheep*; but we (saith our author) without recovering that one which was *lost*, shall lose the rest, for the sake of it; if we do not accept the penance of the persons here referred to.

^m Therefore, &c.] The words within the hooks are added by me, as explanatory to the rest.
ⁿ None of them could afterwards, &c.] Some of those who had lapsed in the time of, persecution, and so in our author's sense were *half-dead*, (only not *quite* ruined) proved afterwards confessors and martyrs, upon a second trial.

to any purpose, by those who should sink into despair, or finding themselves rigorously and finally cut off from the church, should betake to a secular and heathen life; or else should forsake the church, and throw themselves into some heretical or schismatical faction; where, although they should lose their lives for the name of Christ; yet when so settled without the pale of the church, and breaking the laws of unity and charity, ^P they could have no title to the martyrs crown. Wherefore, dear brother, it was our unanimous opinion, upon examining the merits of their respective cases, that such as had received or signed certificates, should be received *pro interim* to communion; and that such as had sacrificed in the heathen worship, should have our charitable relief in the article of extreme danger; because ^Q in the grave there *can be no confession*; nor can we reasonably insist upon any one's submitting to penance, ^R if we deprive him of the fruit of it. If ^S such an one first be brought to the trial of persecution; he will then be furnished by us with defensive armour, which may enable him to stand the shock of it; but if his sickness should press hard upon him before such a day of trial; why, then he will go off with the comfort of peace and communion with the church.

10. For ^T we pretend not to anticipate the judicial sentence of God in his future judgment; so that if he finds the sinner's repentance to be full and satisfactory, then he may ratify and confirm our sentence; as on the other hand, if any one should impose upon us with counterfeit appearances of repentance; God, who *is not mocked*, and who *looketh on the heart*, may judge more exactly, when we could not see to the bottom of the case; and the master may then correct the sentence of his servants; yet we ought, my dear brother, to remember that it is written; ^V *A brother who helpeth a brother shall be exalted*; and that the apostle hath likewise given every one of us advice to *consider our selves, lest we also be tempted; to bear one another's burdens, and so to fulfil the law of Christ*. And elsewhere, by way of reproof to the proud and sufficient, he lays down in his epistle the following caution; *Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*. And again; *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth; yea he shall be bolden up, for God is able to make him stand*. St. John hath also declared, that Jesus Christ our Lord is an advocate and intercessor for our sins, saying; *My little children, these things*

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.

Psal. 6. 5.

9. 10.
That the censures of the church do not limit nor anticipate the judgment of God; but that in doubtful cases we should rather incline to the more favourable side.

Galat. 6. 7.
1 Sam. 16. 7.
Prov. 18. 19.
Galat. 6. 1, 2.
1 Cor. 10. 12.
Rom. 14. 4.

1 John 2. 1, 2.

^Q Sink into despair. Viz. If there were no hope of their being restored to communion, and the peace of the church; then our author apprehended, that some of the consequences would follow which he here immediately subjoins.

^P They could have no title. This our author hath often declared his avowed opinion, that heresy and schism were crimes of too deep a guilt for martyrdom it self to expiate, if the person so martyr'd died in them.

^R In the grave. See note [whilst he is yet in the land of the living] in §. 14. of the case of the lapsed.

^S If we deprive him of the fruit. The fruit expected from penance was restoration to the peace of the church; and people submitted to the one in prospect of the other: so that our author insists upon it, that they who expected people should submit to penance, were bound in all reason to grant them the fruit of it in its proper season.

^T Such an one first be brought to the trial. Our author means, that if the person to whom communion is granted, in the article of danger, should survive it; it might easily fall out, whilst the persecution continued, that he might be brought again to the test of confessing Christ; and then he would be the better able to stand it, for being in communion with the church.

^V We pretend not to anticipate. Though Tertullian had called the censures of the church, in *Apol. 5. 39. Summum futuri judicii prejudicium*; yet this was not in a strict and proper, but only in a probable and moral sense, true. They were, and ought to be, esteemed as carrying a great probability, that God would judge as man had done by his authority; yet with this difference, that God would judge infallibly, where man could only judge upon probable and moral arguments and inducements. Man still might err, though God could not; so that, (as the following words in this §. most plainly intimate) the agency of the priest was not *peremptory* nor *judicial*, but *conditional* only, and *ministerial*; and the moral qualifications of the person, to whom these censures were applied, enter'd very deep into the account of their efficacy.

^V A brother, &c. The LXX read this, *a brother helped by a brother, is like a lofty and strong city*. *Ἀδελφὸς καὶ ἀδελφὸς βοηθῶν ἀλλήλῳ ὡς πύλις ὕψους καὶ ἐνίσχυς*. But our author seems to have read it, *Ἀδελφὸς καὶ ἀδελφὸς βοηθῶν ἀλλήλῳ ὡς πύλις ὕψους*. *A brother helped by a brother, shall be exalted like a strong city*. Bp. Fell.

write

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

write I unto you, that ye sin not: And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. And the apostle St. Paul, in his epistle, hath thus argued; If when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. We should therefore call to mind his tender affections towards us, and should not be rigorous and hard-hearted to our brethren, nor backward in giving them our assistance and encouragement; but should rather condole with them in their sorrows, and *weep with them who weep*; endeavouring, as far as we are able, to support, and comfort, and raise their drooping spirits; taking care, on one hand, not to balk their repentance by our stiffness and rigour; and on the other, not to render their access to communion too soft and easy, by any improper relaxations. The case, in short, is this: Here lies one of our brethren wounded by the adversary in battel; on one side the devil stands prepared to follow his blow, and to kill the person whom he thus hath wounded; on the other, Christ is desirous of saving from utter and final ruin, the man whom he hath redeemed. The question then is, to which of these two, Christ or the devil, we would lend our assistance, or whose side we would favour? Would we chuse to promote the cruel purposes of the devil, and help him to kill; and would we, like the priest and levite in the gospel, pass by our brother, lying in distress half-dead? Or would we not rather do, as becomes the priests of God and Christ (following at once his precepts and example) and snatch our wounded brother out of the enemy's hands; that so when we have done our part towards curing him, we may leave him thence to God his judge?

Luke 10. 31.
32.

S. 11.
Thus we need not fear our indulgence to the lapses, should slacken the zeal of christians for martyrdom; and that the rigours such submitted to, made their case very different from the privileges to which martyrs were entitled.

xx. You need not, dear brother, apprehend, that the zeal of our brethren will in any manner be discouraged, or that the number of martyrs will be lessened, by opening the door of penance to the lapses, or by giving to penitents some hope of peace and absolution. The courage of such as are true believers will continue steady notwithstanding; and they who fear and love God, with all their hearts, will persevere in their integrity, without the least deviation from it. For we allow, you know, a certain time of penance to adulterers, and then we give them the peace of the church; yet is there no observable diminution in the number of our virgins, nor do they desist from their glorious purpose of continuing in a state of continence, thro' the sins of other people. The church still flourishes, and continues adorned with a great number of virgins; nor doth the admission of an adulterer to penance and absolution, weaken those purposes of continence and chastity, upon which others have entered. It is one thing at last, to stand waiting for a pardon; and

By the adversary in battel.] viz. by the devil, and his instruments, in the Devine persecution.

To kill the person.] Our author means, that the devil watched his opportunity, to improve the advantage he had gained over the lapses, and to tempt them to final apostacy, or else to heresy or schism. And the way to save them out of his hands, our author judged, would be, that the church should receive, and take the care of them.

Adorned with a great number of virgins.] As to this order of people in the primitive church, see notes [virgins] and [devoted virgins] in S. 9. of the table of virgins.

It is one thing.] Throughout this whole parallel, as drawn by our author in the following words to the end of the §. we are to consider principally the drift of his argument; which was to show, that there was no likelihood of discouraging any from martyrdom, by the practice of admitting the lapses to penance; since there was at least a great deal of difference between the advantages to which martyrs were entitled, and the conditions whereupon the lapses were admitted to an hope of pardon. The martyrs had immediate access to their reward, (concerning which, see notes [so penance with Christ immediately] and [virtues] referring thereto; note for it) in §. the last, of our author's exhortation to martyrdom; whereas the lapses were there confined to many and great austerities, and at last were referred to the mercy of God in his final judgment; whether they would satisfy the sentence of his church, or not. So that our author, where he mentions their confinement to prison, refers not to their separate state after this life; but only to their afflictions and afflictions, which were equal to the worst imprisonment, in this life, for the present view with him, was the known disadvantage which penitents in this respect lay under; and the prison which at last was granted to them, was only conditional, and waited for its ratification till the day of judgment, and in the mean time was not obtained without great difficulty and trouble. As to what he says of their being purged with fire (purgari dicitur) this must also be interpreted of the penitential furnace, which tried their virtues; or (as our

most

and another, to enter immediately upon glory; one thing, for a man to be sent to prison, and confined there till he hath paid the uttermost farthing; and another, to receive forthwith the recompence of his faith and constancy; one thing, for him to be cleansed from his sins, by a gradual expiation of them in penitential sorrows, and in a long course of severe afflictions; and another, to have cancelled them all at once by the martyr's sufferings; finally, it is one thing, to wait with suspense for the sentence of our Lord in the day of judgment; and another, to be presently crowned by him, without uncertainty or delay.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

12. In the days of our predecessors, some bishops indeed* within our province have been of opinion, that ^b persons guilty of uncleanness, should not be admitted to the peace of the church; and absolutely denied to adulterers all place for repentance; and yet they did not separate themselves from the college of bishops, nor break the unity of the catholick church, by their obstinacy and rigour; nor did he, who refused communion to adulterers, cut himself off from the church, because others did *not* refuse it to them. Each bishop, maintaining the bonds of unity, without a breach in them, hath indeed a right to regulate his own administration by prudential measures, and is accountable to our Lord for such his conduct.

§. 12.
That some African bishops had denied the privilege of penance to adulterers, tho' without breach of peace with those of contrary sentiments.

13. I cannot therefore but wonder at the obstinacy of those, who are ^c for denying penance to the lapsed, or for refusing the *peace* of the church to such as have gone thro' it; when yet they may find it written, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent.* And this, it is observable, is said to one, who had fallen, and whom our Lord there exhorts and encourages, to rise again by good works; inasmuch as it is farther written, that *alms do deliver from death*: Not certainly from that death, which the blood of Christ and the grace of his holy baptism have once for all abolished; but from that, which groweth upon us afterwards by sin. Thus likewise our Lord elsewhere hath assigned us a time for repentance, and threatned those who do not lay hold of it; *I have diverse things* (saith he) *against thee, because thou suffereest thy wife Jezebel, which calleth her self a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols: And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.* These several persons we can never imagine God would have thus invited and encouraged to repentance, except he had determined to extend his mercy to penitents.

§. 13.
That they who denied peace to the lapsed, contradicted the holy scriptures.
Revel. 2. 5.
Tob. 4. 10.

Revel. 2. 10;
21, 22.

most learned editor not improbably conjectures; from some MSS. which instead of *du igne* read it *divine*, the words *du igne*, should be *divine*, as referring to their long continuance in a state of penitential mortifications: Of which the whole series of the argument makes it necessary for us to interpret our author's words in the remainder of the §. He opposes the martyr's state of security and perfect bliss in another life, to the uncertainties and afflictions of penitents in this.

* Within our province. Vix. Africa, in its more restrained sense called Zeugitana, as comprehending only the countrey, which, upon the conquest of Carthage, was reduced to the form of a Roman province. Bishop Fell.

^b Persons guilty of uncleanness. It is evident from what Tertullian hath written and objected to the church after he turned *Donatist*, in his book *de pudicitia*, that the church before the times of Novatus and Novatian, did generally admit these people to her communion upon penance. Tho' it is very likely, that Tertullian's arguments might prevail upon some bishops to deny it. Yet so long as the church had made no general determination on either side of the question; every bishop used herein a discretionary power, and admitted, or refused, the persons thus guilty, as they were severally inclined to the more rigorous, or favourable methods. So that, if Novatian had considered this matter calmly, he would never have broken communion with the church for any decision of this dispute.

^c For denying penance, or refusing the peace, &c.] From hence, and from a passage in the foregoing §, it should seem, that there were two sorts and degrees of rigour; one was for denying all place of repentance; for refusing to admit adulterers even to penance; another sort would admit, it should seem, fornicators, at least, to penance; but would not grant them the peace of the church after it; and this sort seems to have most prevailed in succeeding ages. Penance (we find) was granted, but communion denied. The case of such delinquents was not judged desperate, even by the Novatians themselves, with respect to the *mercy* of God; only they were against relaxing the discipline of the church, by admitting such persons to the peace of it; and so they would have had them continue in a state of penance during life.

A. D. 152.
Epistle LV.
Luke 15. 7.

Wisd. I. 13.

Joel 2. 12, 13.

Psal. 89. 32.
33.

Matt. 7.9, 10
II.

Matt. 5. 4.

§. 14. *A character of Novatian.*

And thus our Lord hath declared in the gospel; *I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance.* Now since we find it written, that *God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living*; the consequence is clear and certain, that he who would have none to perish, would have sinners to repent, and by repentance return to life again. Accordingly he hath proclaimed by his prophet *Joel*; *Now also saith the Lord God, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rent your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil which he hath inflicted.* We read moreover in the *psalms*, the justice of God in his menaces, and his mercies in saving the persons he so had threatned; punishing them in order to their reformation, and then saving them after it; *I will visit (saith he) their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them.* Our Lord in like manner displaying the bowels of his Father's compassions towards us, thus saith in the gospel; *What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things unto them who ask him?* In which words our Lord hath vouchsafed to compare the boundless compassions of God the Father, with those of an earthly father. Wherefore if an earthly father, being evil, and, tho' grievously offended by a wicked son, yet, upon observing his amendment and reformation, with hearty sorrow for his past miscarriages, and his return to a regular and sober life, (if, I say, an earthly father,) is truly joyful for such a change of his son's behaviour, and is most willing to receive him again with paternal tenderness, though before he had given him up as lost and desperate; how much more will the one true Father, who alone is good, alone is tender and compassionate; nay, even goodness, tenderness, and compassion it self; rejoice in the repentance and reformation of his children? How much more forward will he be, not to denounce his wrath against penitents, nor punishment against such as lament and mourn for their sins; but rather, to hold out for them his promises of pardon and mercy? Upon which view we may well suppose that our Lord in the gospel declared the *happiness of such as mourn*, because mourning hath a natural tendency to draw down mercy; whereas pride and obstinacy aggravate wrath, and enflame the punishment of such as are obnoxious to it. Wherefore, dear brother, we have upon the whole determined, that such as have not submitted to penance, nor testified their sorrow for their sins by publick and solemn professions of it, should be entirely cut off from all hope of peace and communion, if they first began to ask it in a time of danger and extremity; since it seems not to have been a true sorrow for their sin which moved them then to ask it; but they were driven to it rather by a near view of their approaching dissolution: Now he deserves no comfort at his death, who in his life-time would never consider that he was a mortal.

14. As to the person of *Novatian*, dear brother, concerning whom you desire to know from me, what hereby he hath introduced into the church; it doth not, I think, become us to be curious in our enquiries "after his doctrine; but rather to be diligent in our searchings out of his errors, and to be ready to confute them, as they shall be offered to our view." [See this passage in *Yvel.* cited and noted in the last of the *case of the deposed* and *His doctrine*.] It was not sufficient to agree in the same tenets of *faith* with the church; if our *actions* may be credited, whilst any man quarrelled with her *discipline*; and thereupon divided from her communion: This was his sworn opinion; which he hath here and elsewhere declared with all possible plainness; and it was much to be wished, that they who would lessen the guilt of schism, in such places the points of doctrine from which they separate, would be persuaded to consider these primitive notions of catholic unity.

...without great difficulty and trouble. As to what he says of their being purged with fire, **Π ΤΡΑΤ** since this must also be interpreted of the potential furnace, which tried their virtues: **St** (as our

since whatever he may teach, he teaches it out of the church: Whosoever, or whatsoever else he be, he can be no christian who is not in the church of Christ. Let him bear himself as high as he will, and boast as much and vainly as he pleases, of his eloquence and philosophy; he hath lost whatever he might have otherwise pretended to, by breaking the bonds of brotherly charity, and ecclesiastical unity: Unless you can think him a bishop, who, when another was ordained so by sixteen of his brethren-bishops, would obtrude upon the church, a spurious and foreign bishop, ordained by a parcel of renegadoes and deserters, and that by canvassing and intriguing for it: And, whereas there was one church appointed by Christ throughout the world, though divided into many members; and one episcopate, whereof divers bishops, spread over the face of the whole earth, and acting together with an harmonious concert, are severally partakers: He, notwithstanding the tradition to this purpose derived from God; and notwithstanding the unity of the church, which is every where maintained so firmly, is now attempting to form a church of a mere human model; and accordingly he dispatches his new apostles to divers cities, in order to lay the foundations of his new-fangled oeconomy: Whereas, moreover, in each city of every province, there are bishops ordained; venerable for their age, untainted in their principles, approved in the day of trial and adversity, and outlawed in the time of persecution; he is so daring and adventurous, as to constitute over their heads a set of spurious pretending-bishops; as if he were able to carry his new attempt through the whole christian world, by obstinately persisting in it; or could break asunder the well-compacted joints of the body of the church, by scattering his seeds of discord in it. He considers not the usual process of schismatics, who in their first attempts are always most impetuous; but can seldom make any great increase, nor improve upon such rash beginnings; instead of it, they usually fall away, and their rival-pretensions come all to nothing. Even if he had been ordained before *Cornelius*, he could not have held his bishoprick, after his revolt and separation from the body of his fellow-bishops, and from the unity of the church; especially since the apostle hath admonished us to support one another, in order to prevent, if possible, any such departure from the unity which God hath appointed; thus saying, *Supporting one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* He therefore who neither keeps the unity of the spirit, nor the bond of peace; but instead of it departs from the common ties of the church, and the college of bishops, can have no title to the power or privilege of a bishop, as having broken the peace and unity of the episcopate.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LV.

15. Besides; what a pitch of arrogance and presumption is it; what a disregard to all the rules of modesty and meekness, for any man to imagine himself able to do what our Lord did not empower his apostles to do; viz. to distinguish the tares from the wheat; or (as if he were privileged to carry the fan in his hand, and to purge the floor) to set about a separation of the chaff from the wheat? And although the apostle hath told us, *That in a great*

§. 15.
That it is our
Lord's prerogative to separate the tares from the wheat.
2 Tim. 2. 20.

One episcopate.] See more of this in note upon it, §. 4. of the unity of the church. Of a mere human model.] Therefore one would think it to have been our author's opinion, that the model of the church, as built upon the foundation of the apostles, was divine; which whoever hath been any way an instrument of altering, is so far guilty of forming a church of a mere human model. The apostles committed the church to the government of bishops; they, to others after them; and so on, in a vicarious succession. Whoever hath departed from this rule, or broken in upon the episcopal authority, in things essential to its subsistence, hath so far substituted an human, instead of a divine model, for the government of the christian church, especially if he hath done it without necessity.

Supporting.] Our author reads it *firmamentis invicem*; so interpreting *mutuo*, as *mutually*. Can have no title.] i. e. He ought to have been deposed; even if he had been ordained before *Cornelius*, into a vacant see, he would have forfeited it by heresy and schism; and the bishops of the catholic church, which he had so divided, should have withdrawn their communion from him. Much more, as the case stood in fact, viz. as he taught an heretical doctrine, and invaded a see canonically full, when there was no colour of deprivation to be alleged against *Cornelius*, who filled it.

boots

Now this, in our author's judgment, was a mockery and bait upon the poor delinquents.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

Psal. 2. 9.

§. 16.

That it followed from the current practice of absolving persons who had been guilty of uncleanness, that the lapsed should also be absolved.
Revel. 2. 23.
John 5. 14.

1 Cor. 6. 18.

2 Cor. 12.
20, 21.

Ephes. 5. 5.

Coloss. 3. 5, 6.

house there are ^k not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; to single out the vessels of gold and of silver, despising, rejecting, and condemning the vessels of wood and of earth; whereas the vessels of wood are not to be burnt till the general conflagration in the day of our Lord; and those of earth are not to be broken, but by him who alone is entrusted with the rod of iron?

16. Or if he will needs set himself up for a judge, and for a searcher of the reins and heart; let him judge alike in all cases, in one as well as in another; and when he knows it is written, ^l Behold thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee; let him accordingly separate ^m all unclean persons from his fellowship and society; inasmuch as the case of the unclean person, hath really more aggravation in it, than that of the libellatick; since the latter's sin proceeds from necessity, the former's from choice; one imagining it sufficient virtue in him not to have actually polluted himself with the heathen sacrifices, is indeed in that respect under an error of his judgment; but the other, breaking in upon the rights of the conjugal bed, ⁿ or else entering the common stews, to pollute himself with the filth of vagrant and common prostitutes, doth thereby corrupt a body dedicated to Christ, and violate the temple of God, by his abominable impurities; as he might read the apostle, saying; Every sin which a man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body: Yet even to these men is penance granted, and hope is given them, that, by their sorrow for their sin, they may at length atone for it; according to what the same apostle hath hinted, where he saith; I fear, lest when I come amongst you, I shall bewail many of those who have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed. Nor let these new hereticks flatter themselves upon this pretence, that they do not, forsooth, communicate with idolaters; since among themselves there are adulterers, and unclean persons, who are really guilty of idolatry, in the opinion of this same apostle, who hath said; This know ye, that no whore-monger, nor unclean person, ^o nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. And again; Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, ^p laying aside fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which are all idolatry. For which things sake cometh the wrath of God. For since our bodies are the members of Christ, and each of us is a temple of God; whosoever, by adultery, violates the temple of God, is understood to violate God himself; and whosoever, in committing sin, doth the will of the devil, serves in effect the devil, and so is an idolater. For evil deeds proceed not from the Holy Ghost, but from the instinct of our grand enemy, and evil concupiscence springing from the

^k Not only vessels of gold.] The purport of the passage, as levelled against Novatian, was this; He was for casting quite out of the church, all those who had lapsed in the time of persecution; our author was for assigning them penance, and so for receiving them, after they had gone thro' it; and to the Novatian objection, that the church would be defiled by receiving such members, he directs the reply which is contained in this §.

^l Behold thou art made whole.] This text was probably applied by the Novatians to the establishment of their own practice, in not admitting those to the peace of the church, who, after baptism, had relapsed into a state of heathenism, by apostatizing from the christian faith, in the times of persecution. N. B. If the followers of Novatian, extended his refusal of absolution to the lapsed, to the refusal of it in all cases of wilful sin; it is plain, from our author's argument with him in this §, that he did not deny it to the sins of uncleanness.

^m All unclean persons.] Fraudators & machos. The fraudators here are the persons guilty of the sin, which the apostle, in Ephes. 4. 19. and Coloss. 3. 5. calls *malitia* which was certainly meant by him of a sin of the flesh.

ⁿ Or else entering.] They who would represent vagrant fornication, as a venial sin, may here observe our author joining it with the foulest and worst offences.

^o Nor covetous men.] *Malitia*. That this refers to the sins of the flesh hath been already noted; tho' I have followed here our common translation.

^p Laying aside.] *Exponitur*, or *deponitur*. So our author; but the word appears not in our present copies.

suggestions of that unclean spirit, leads us on to actions most repugnant to the will of God, and so engage us in the service of the devil. Hence it follows; that if they will assert, one man to be polluted with another's sin, and will insist, that the idolatry of the person committing it, passeth over to a person who hath not committed it; they cannot, according to their own principles and positions, excuse themselves from the guilt of idolatry; since the apostle hath pronounced all adulterers, and unclean persons, with whom they professedly communicate, guilty of it. But we conceive we hold the truth, according to the analogy of faith, and of the holy scriptures, when we assert, that every man must answer for his own sin, and that the guilt of one will not be transferred to another; our Lord having expressly told us, *That the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.* And again; *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children; nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.* We therefore considering and abiding by the lessons which are here laid down for us, are of opinion, that no one should lose the ¹ fruit of his penance, nor the hope of peace; inasmuch as we are assured from the tenour of holy scripture, and from the invitations and encouragements which God himself hath given to sinners, both that they are admitted to terms of repentance, and that pardon and the peace of the church are not then to be withheld from them.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LV.

Ezek. 18. 20.

2 Kings 14. 6.

17. ^{§. 17.} What a mockery is it of our brethren; what a cheat upon the poor deluded penitents; and what a novel unsupported fiction is it of these hereticks; to pretend, that people should be put upon penitential severities, and yet not receive the fruit, nor the cure expected from them! To say to our brethren; "Be sure to lament and to weep abundantly; spend your days and nights in sighs and groans; and endeavour by all sorts of good works to wash away your guilt; but after all, you must dye out of the church; you must do every thing requisite to obtain the peace of it; and yet the peace for which you are solicitous, must never be granted you." Who would not be ready to dye with agony, at hearing such an address to him? Who would not hence become immediately desperate? Who indeed would not hence be induced to lay aside all thought of submitting to penitential severities? Would the husbandman, think you, toil and labour, if he should be told; "That he might indeed till his ground with all imaginable art and diligence; but that he should have no harvest, no vintage, no olives from his olive-ground, nor apples from his trees." Or should you attempt to persuade a trader by sea, in this manner saying; "Chuse your timber, brother, out of the choicest woods, build your ship of the strongest oak, and be careful to fit it out with the best and most useful rigging; let your steering, your cables, and your sails, be all perfect in their kind; and yet when you have done all, you shall reap no advantage, from any course which she shall take, or from any single voyage upon which you shall send her." This is indeed to shut up, as it were, the avenues to penitential sorrow for sin; if when our Lord God in his holy scriptures hath encouraged penitents returning to him, we, by intercepting the fruits and advantages of penance, shall in effect destroy penance it self. Wherefore if we find, upon sifting this matter to the bottom, that no one ought to be driven from repentance; and that the peace of the church, according to the abundant mercies

That exhortations to repentance, with the refusals of pardon, were mockeries, and not exhortations.

¹ Fruit of his penance.] Viz. absolution, and the privilege of church communion.

² Both that they are admitted.] Here our author meets with the more rigorous, as well as the easier sort of Novatians. For the more rigorous sort, would not so much as admit the lapsed to terms of repentance; but the easier sort admitted them so far, though they never granted them the peace of the church: Whereas our author asserts, that both were due to them. See note in §. 13. of this epistle [for denying penance, or refusing the peace, &c.]

[What a mockery.] With a seeming lenity, the Montanists and Novatians pretended, that they would leave those sins to the mercies of God, which they could not, or would not, admit to the peace of the church: Now this, in our author's judgment, was a mockery and banter upon the poor delinquents.

A. D. 251.
Epistle LVI.

EPISTLE LVI.

In the month of April, our author wrote an answer to the question which had been propounded to him from certain bishops, who were met together to ordain a bishop for the city of Capsa; whether such lapsed, as had been for three years in a state of penance, might not then be admitted to communion. This, our right reverend annalist observes, must have been before the council, which was held in the May of this year; because the council so determined this question, that there was afterwards no room for moving it. This was to be esteemed as the third year of their penance, begun, but not concluded. The question therefore was, whether, after their entrance upon the third year of their penance, they might be admitted to communion.

Written after
our author's
return.

CYPRIAN to his brethren * Fortunatus, Ahimnius, Optatus, Pravian, Donatulus, and Felix, sendeth greeting.

YOU wrote to me, my dearest brethren, that when you were met together in the city of Capsa to ordain a bishop, Superius, our brother and colleague, laid the following case before you; viz. that our brethren Ninus, Clementianus, and Florus; (who had formerly been taken up in the late persecution, and confessed the name of Christ, and bravely stood the outrages of the magistrate and people) afterwards yielded to the length and force of their torments, which the proconsul increased upon them, and so fell from that pitch of honour to which they were hastening with a full career of constancy and courage; yet that after their unhappy lapse, which was not so properly the effect of their choice as of compulsion, they desisted not for these last three years from a course of penance. Upon this case you have thought fit to start a question; and to consult me upon it, whether they might now be admitted to communion. As to my own opinion upon it, I will freely give it you; that the mercies of our Lord will not be wanting to such as shall appear to have entered the lists in his service, and confessed his name, and stood the outrages of the magistrate and people with bravery and success, and suffered imprisonment, and a great while bore the threats of the proconsul, and the rage of the populace, and the repeated torments which were at divers times applied to them; inso-

* Fortunatus.] Who this person was, the reader may find hinted in my introduction to our author's tract, entitled, *An exhortation to martyrdom*.

b Capsa.] A city of Numidia *Bunucum*, which bishop Pravianus voted in the 69th suffrage of the council of Carthage.

c Of the magistrates.] The Decian persecution began with singular tumults; thence the magistrates of each city followed it; and at last it was ordered by the proconsul of the province, whose power extended to life and death. Bp. Fell.

d To which they were hastening.] Viz. Martyrdom; if they could have stood the proconsul's torments.

e For these last three years.] These three years cannot be reckoned complete ones; since the persecution began not till the latter end of the year 249, and the Decii (under whom it raged) perished in the latter end of the year 251; so that this calculation was favourably made for the lapsed; and three years complete being the legitimate time of penance; the parts of each year in which their penance begun and ended, were reckoned as complete to them: They begun it (suppose) in the year 250, continued it during the whole year 251, and in April, 252, this question concerning them was started.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LVI.

much, that the weakness of their flesh, which could no longer at last hold out, seems amply compensated, and excused by the merits of their preceding constancy: To such it should therefore be thought a sufficient punishment, that they have forfeited the honour they had gained; and we need not add to it any farther weight, by shutting against them the door of pardon and mercy, or by denying them the privilege of communion with us. I am clearly of opinion, that the penance which you tell me, they have submitted to for these three years, with great and continued professions of their godly sorrow, will be effectual to obtain from our Lord his merciful pardon. Certainly it can never be said, that we admit those persons to the peace of the church, rashly or lightly, whom we have seen behaving themselves gallantly in battle with the enemy, not yielding till downright force compelled them; and, who might, upon a second trial, recover the honour they lost by that defeat. For since it was a case determined by us^c in council, that relief should be given, and the peace of the church be granted to penitents in danger of death; I cannot but think that they have more right and reason to expect it, who happened to fall, not so much through the weakness of their purposes, or through want of courage, as through the infirmity of their flesh; which having been grievously wounded in battle, would not suffer them to carry off with them^d the crown of their confession; and especially since they could not get leave to die, though they were very desirous of it; but were continued upon the torture, not indeed till their faith was conquered, which was invincible; but till their flesh, which was frail and weak, was tired out. However, since you have desired, in your letter, that I would debate this affair at large with my colleagues; and since the business is of great importance, and requires a mature deliberation with them; and since most of them are now upon their fees,^e in the beginning of the paschal solemnity, spending it with their own people; as soon as they have finished it, and begin to resort hither, in any numbers, I will debate this question with them more at large, that we may come to some determinate resolution upon the case which you have laid before us, and send you, in concert, the joint opinions of divers bishops. My dearest brethren, I wish you all manner of health and prosperity, and so take my leave of you.

^c In council.] Vix. That which was held the last year upon the case. For that which was held in the May of this year, determined the matter so fully, that afterwards there was no room for any doubt or question concerning it.

^d The crown of their confession.] That which would have completed their confession, would have been the crown of martyrdom; but this the infirmity of the flesh would not suffer them to reach.

^e In the beginning of the paschal solemnity.] This fixes the date of the epistle to April; on the third day of which, according to the canon of Hippolytus, Easter day fell in this year 252.

As soon as they have finished it.] In the metropolis of each province, the bishops of it met twice a year in council; once after Easter, and once in autumn.



A. D. 252.
Epistle LVII.



EPISTLE LVII.

Contains the synodical determination of the second council of Carthage, held upon the case of the lapsed. The former council, which hath been mentioned in my notes, upon the preceding epistle, had determined, that the lapsed should be continued a great while in a state of penance, wherein they should submit to all sorts of penitential mortification; and in extreme danger of death (if any fell into such danger during their penance) they should be admitted to the peace of the church. Now this synod, held in May, 252. relaxed the severity of the former sentence; and admitted those of the lapsed to peace, who had not deserted the church, nor desisted from a course of penance since the time of their lapse. And this resolution was taken as well in compassion to the lapsed, as upon a near view of another persecution; wherein those lapsed might repair their honour, and be the better enabled so to do, by being fortified with the viaticum of church-communion. Our author in this letter sends to Cornelius an account of the whole transaction in the name of the rest.

CYPRIAN, Liberalis, Caldonius, Nicomedes, Cæcilius, Junius, Marrutius, Felix, Successus, Faustinus, Fortunatus, Victor, Saturninus, another Saturninus, Rogatianus, Tertullus, Lucianus, Eutyches, Amplus, Sattius, Secundinus, another Saturninus, Aurelius, Priscus, Herculanus, Victorius, Quintus, Honoratus, Montanus, Hortensianus, Verianus, Jambus, Donatus, Pompeius, Polycarpus, Demetrius, another Donatus, Privatianus, another Fortunatus, Rogatus, and Monulus to Cornelius, their brother, send greeting.

IS some time, dear brother, since we came to a resolution upon a full debate, that such as had been misled by the adversary, in the heat of the persecution, and had lapsed and polluted themselves with heathen sacrifices, should continue for a great while in a state of ^b full penance; and, in case of extreme danger, should be admitted to the peace of the church just before their deaths. For indeed we thought it hard, and unsuitable to the merciful compassions of God our Father, to shut the doors of his church against those who should knock at them; to deprive them, in their misery, of those supports and encouragements which

^a Some time.] Vix. In the former council held the autumn before.

^b Full penance.] Was going through all the stages of penance. Whether these were so explicitly marked out, and so particularly divided into the several stations of mourners, hearers, prostrate, and by-standers, as they were in the 4th century, is not very certain. Some of these, however, might probably now be known; and, according to the nature of the offence, they were either all to be gone through, as in the case here of the lapsed; or else the penitent, if his case were more favourable, might be placed at first, among the prostrate, or hearers, and so be dispensed with for the time he should have spent among the mourners. This point I have elsewhere more at large considered, in chap. 2. part 1. §. 2. of the penitential discipline.

D. A. 252.
Epistle LVII.

Matt. 16. 19.

they might receive from communion with the church, or to dismiss them to their final abodes without it; especially since he, who first laid down the rule, allowed, that *whatsoever was bound on earth should be bound in heaven*; and on the other hand, *whatsoever should be loosed in the church, might be loosed in heaven*. But since we plainly perceive, that ^a the day is approaching of another persecution; and we are admonished, by divers signs and tokens, to be prepared and armed for the encounter, wherewith the enemy now is threatening us; as also, to fortify, beforehand, the minds of the people committed to our charge; and to make a general rendezvous of Christ's soldiers within his camp, who are desirous to have arms put into their hands, and seem eager for the engagement: In this extremity we agreed to determine, that they who have never deserted the church of our Lord, nor ceased to mourn for, and lament their sin; nor desisted from a course of penance, since the time of their unhappy lapse, should receive the peace of the church; and, by it, be prepared for the encounter, which is so near approaching. For we thought it very improper to disobey those seasonable signs and admonitions, whereby the shepherds were directed not to abandon their sheep in a time of danger, but to gather their flock together, to exercise the soldiery of our Lord, and thereby to train them up for their spiritual campaign. Indeed so long as we had peaceable and settled times, there was reason for a longer continuance of penitents under a state of mortification; yet so, as to relax it in the case of sickness and danger: The posture of times, and persons, *then* admitted well of such a delay; and we had it always in our power, to assist our dying brethren in their latest moments: But *now* the peace of the church is as necessary to people in full health and strength, as *then* it was to the sick; and the *living* have *now* as much need of communion, as the *dying* *then* had; except we would leave those naked and defenceless, whom we are exhorting and encouraging to enter the lists, and to fight our Lord's battle: Whereas we should rather support and strengthen them with the body and blood of Christ; and, inasmuch as the design of the eucharist is, to be a defence and security for those who partake of it; we should fortify them, whose safety we are concerned for, with the armament of our Lord's conquest: How else shall we be able to persuade them, that they should spill their blood in the confession of Christ's name; if, when they are just entering upon the engagement, we deny them the blood of Christ? Or how shall we fit them for drinking the cup of martyrdom, if we will not first admit them to the cup of the Lord, by allowing them the right of communion with his church?

§. 2.
That this indulgence extended not to apostates, but only to penitents.

2. There is, and ought to be, made, a very great difference between *those* who have apostatized, and returned to the world, which at their baptism they renounced, and lead in it a secular and heathen life; or else are gone over to heretics, and thence, with impious arms, make daily assaults upon the

Whatsoever was bound. We have, in this allusion to Matt. 16. 19. our author's opinion for interpreting the passage, of church-censures, and of relaxations from them.

The day is approaching. Viz. The persecution under Gallus; who succeeding Decius, soon renewed his cruelty against the Christians; so that this persecution is justly called a continuation of the 1st general one. Bishop Fell saith, that, tho' our author was against admitting the lapsed to communion in the midst of the Decian persecution; telling them, (as he doth in ep. 19.) that, *if they were so impatient for a return to the church, the way was open to them, and the season such as would give them a fair opportunity of obtaining all they asked for;* (meaning that they might expiate their crime by martyrdom) yet now, he was for arming the lapsed for another encounter, by admitting them to communion: But then there was a difference between a time of persecution, and of a cessation from it. St. Cyprian would not admit them to communion from his own private sentiments, till he had the concurrence, and authority of other bishops for it; which could not be had till a time of peace. And they had now approved the sincerity of their repentance, by their submission to penitential rigours; all which made the case very different from what it was, when our author wrote his 19th epistle.

To the cup of the Lord, by allowing them the right. The right of communion implied their right to the cup of the Lord. If they had a right to the one, it is most evident that they had also a right to the other; so that the lapsed were then, most plainly, admitted to the cup. *Si non eis prius ad bibendum in ecclesia poculum Domini jure communicationis admittimus.*

church;

church; and *those*, who, without ever departing from the church, or ever ceasing to implore the help and comfort of God their Father, profess themselves ready to enter the lists afresh; there to abide the utmost heat of the battel, and manfully to fight in it for the name of their Lord, and for their own salvation. At such a time as this the peace we grant them, is not designed as an encouragement to sloth, but watchfulness; not to indolence and ease, but rather as an alarm to the battel. If, as we hear, and hope, and believe of them, they shall stand their ground courageously; and, together with us, shall worst their enemy in the engagement; we shall have no cause to repent of having granted peace to such valiant soldiers; nay, it will be a peculiar honour and ornament to our episcopate, to have given the peace of the church to martyrs: So shall we, who in virtue of our priestly office, offer up daily sacrifices to God, provide for him also the victims and oblations.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LVII.

3. But now if any one of the lapsed (which God forbid) should sue for peace hypocritically, and should be admitted to communion upon the prospect of his undertaking the encounter, which he never really designs to undertake; he only deceives himself to his hurt, who means one thing in his heart, and utters another with his mouth. As for us; we judge as well as we can from outward appearances; but we cannot search the heart, nor see into any one's inward purposes. These are only cognisable by him, who will soon come and shew himself a searcher of the most hidden things, and a discernor of the secrets of the heart: Mean while a person, thus evil-minded, should not be suffered to prejudice the good; on the contrary, the good should rather be serviceable to the evil. Nor should they who are undertaking the glorious work of martyrdom, be denied the peace of the church; because some, perhaps, in the event, will flinch from it; but rather all who are entering the lists, should have it granted them; lest some, through our want of discernment, should happen to be rejected, who are designed to gain the prize in battel.

§. 3.
The objection foreclosed, that possibly the repentance of the lapsed might be counterfeited.

4. Nor let any one say in this case, that he who takes up martyrdom is baptized in his own blood; and therefore it is not necessary for him to receive the peace of the church from his bishop, who will otherwise be entitled to it from his glorious achievement; and will receive, from the mercies of our Lord, a much nobler recompence: For first, he cannot be fit for martyrdom, who is not fitted out for the encounter by the church; who is not fortified and prepared for it by receiving the eucharist, and by deriving thence his ardor and courage; since our Lord hath said in his gospel; *When they deliver you up, take no thought what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* Now when he saith, that the Spirit of their Father speaketh in those who are delivered up, and brought to confess his name; how is it imaginable, that he should be found prepared and fitted for such a confession, who by receiving the peace of the church, hath not first received the Spirit of the Father, which giveth strength and encouragement to his servants, and speaketh and confesseth in them? Or again; If a person under these circumstances shall leave all, and fly for it; and whilst he is lurking up and down, shall either fall into the hands of robbers, or die of a fever,

§. 4.
Another objection foreclosed, that the peace of the church is not necessary to martyrs.

Matt. 10. 19, 20.

¹ *The good should rather.*] Since there will be some of both, and man cannot distinguish, with certainty, between them; we should rather err on the charitable side, and let the good assist the bad, than suffer the bad to prejudice the good; i. e. let some bad men rather be admitted to communion, than any good man be rejected from it.

² *Takes up martyrdom.*] *Martyrium tollit.* An expression borrowed from Luke 9. 23. where our Saviour mentions the taking up his cross. Bp. Fell.

³ *Baptized in his own blood.*] This was the common notion of martyrdom, that it supplied all defect of ordinances; and on this received maxim was the objection founded.

⁴ *He cannot be fit.*] It is a known opinion of our author's, frequently before noted, that no martyrs could become so out of the church.

⁵ *By receiving the peace of the church.*] Our author most plainly supposeth, that the Spirit of God was limited to his ordinances, where those ordinances might be had.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LVII.

Ezek. 34. 3.
4, 5.

Y. 10.

Y. 16.

or other distemper; will it not be charged upon us, that so good a foldier of Christ, who left all for his sake; and despising his family, parents, and children, chose rather to follow his master, is forced to go off without the comfort of peace and communion? Will not great neglect, or great cruelty be imputed to us in the day of judgment; that, as shepherds, we would take no due care of the sheep committed to our trust, in times of peace, nor arm them for the battel in the times of distress and war? Will not our Lord accuse us? As we find he did, by his prophet, the Jewish pastors, saying, *Ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the wooll; and ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which strayed, neither have ye sought that which was lost; and that which was strong ye wore out with labour. And my sheep were scattered because there was no shepherd, and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, and none did search after them to bring them back. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hands; and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, and they shall not feed them any more; and I will deliver my flock from their mouth, and I will feed them with judgment.* Wherefore, lest the sheep committed to us, should be taken from our mouth, with which we deny them the peace of the church; and give them such cruel answers, favouring more of man's rigour, than of God's mercy; we determined, by the suggestions of the Holy Ghost, and by diverse admonitions and visions from our Lord, assuring us, that the enemy was just upon us, ^m to gather the soldiers of Christ into his camp; and, upon hearing the merits of each cause, to give the peace of the church to such of them as had lapsed, and so to furnish them with arms for the approaching battel; and we hope the measures we have taken, so conformable to the mercies of God, will be agreeable to you likewise. But if any of our colleagues should be of opinion, that the peace of the church is not to be granted to our brothers and sisters, in a time of such pressing danger; let him know, that he must give an account to God in the day of judgment, for his unseasonable severity and rigour. We have thus unburdened our consciences to you, agreeably to the rules of our holy religion, the laws of charity, and the concern we have for the welfare of our brethren; we have plainly laid our thoughts before you, that a storm is coming, and that a furious enemy will speedily declare himself against us; that the struggle will not be like the late one, but ⁿ more sharp and insupportable. This we have had frequently revealed to us from above, and the merciful providence of our Lord doth often remind us of it; through whose assistance and compassion to us, we, who trust in him, may securely hope, that he who in times of peace hath foretold to his foldiers the approaching battel, will crown them with victory when engaged in it. We heartily wish your welfare, dearest brother, and so take our leave of you.

^l *Wore out with labour.*] So the LXX, from which the sense of the Hebrew is not very remote, reading it, *ye dominie'd over them with cruelty.*

^m *To gather, &c.*] In a time of danger to put them upon their guard, to make them keep watch and ward, and to get them into a place of safety.

ⁿ *More sharp.*] It proved so to Cornelius, who suffered in it; but not to our author, as our most learned editor seems to have mistaken; for St. Cyprian suffered not in the persecution of Gallus, but Valerian. Nor can it in strictness be said, that the persecution of Gallus was sharper than that of Decius, except we will allow our author's fears to excuse him in an hyperbole. Nor as our most learned editor well observes, were the prophets themselves always the justest interpreters of their own visions. The gift of interpreting was different from that of prophecy. See 1 Cor. 12. 10.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.

EPISTLE LVIII.

*It should seem by the application of the people of Thibaris to our metropoli-
tan, and by his answer directed to them, and not to their bishop, that
their see was at that time vacant. They had desired a visit from him,
to support the minds of the faithful there, by his pastoral exhortations.
He excuses himself from coming, by the difficulty of the times, and the
near approaches of the persecution; but in answer to their desire of his
exhortations, he sends them this letter, written, probably, in the month
of June, A. D. 252.*

CYPRIAN to the people dwelling at Thibaris, sendeth greeting.



Had it, my dearest Brethren, in my thoughts and wishes, if the pos-
ture of the times would have given leave for it, to have come to
you in person, as you had often desired of me; and to have used
the best of my weak endeavours for strengthening the minds of our
brethren with you, by all proper persuasives and exhortations: But
since the exigence is such, that I cannot well absent my self for any time
from the People, whom God hath been pleased to commit to my charge;
I therefore send you this letter, in the mean time, to supply my place. For
since our Lord hath been graciously pleased to give me^a frequent admonitions
of what is coming upon us; I could not but think it incumbent on me to
communicate to you the substance of those admonitions, and the concern they
have given me. You may therefore depend upon it as a certainty, that a
storm is gathering over our heads, and will soon fall upon us; ^b that the world
is drawing to a period, and that the time of antichrist is approaching; which
is a reason for us to stand upon our guard, and to have nothing so much in
our thoughts as immortal glory, and the crown assigned to such as shall confess
the name of our Lord. Nor do I believe that the trial which is now in view,
will be like the former, which is past, but more severe and raging; which
therefore the soldiers of Christ should prepare themselves to encounter, with a
Faith untainted, and with a fearless courage; as remembring, that they do
therefore^c drink every day the *blood of Christ*, that for the sake of Christ they
may be enabled to shed their *own*. For this is, indeed, approving our willing-
ness to be found with Christ, to imitate in our practice what he did and taught,

§. 1.

^a *Frequent admonitions.* See note [*vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure*] in epist. 7.
^b *That the world is drawing to a period.* Tertullian, and other of the earlier fathers were in this er-
ror; and the apostles themselves seem not to have been quite exempt from it. For since *no man, not
the Son himself* knew of that day and hour, it might be very easy for any man to mistake it: And it
hath been observed already in note [*more sharp*] on §. 4. of the preceding epistle, that the prophets
were not always the justest interpreters of their own visions. There was a certainty that a storm was
coming; so far our author was right; but that it should be sharper than the preceding, or that the end
of the world was approaching with it, (this) was his inference and conjecture, from the former certainty;
and therein he was mistaken.

^c *Drink every day the blood of Christ.* Observe hence the practice of daily communion, with the rea-
son of it, viz. a preparation for martyrdom; and observe farther, that the cup was not then withheld
from the laity.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.
1 John 2. 6.
Rom. 8. 16,
17.

according to that of the apostle, saying; *He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked.* The blessed apostle St. Paul hath likewise thus encouraged us, saying; *We are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.*

§. 2.
He adds an incentive to them to undergo martyrdom with cheerfulness.
John 16. 2,
3, 4.

2. All which we should attentively consider in this critical juncture, that none of us may attach our affections to any worldly good, when the world it self is passing away, and drawing to its period; but rather follow Christ, who liveth for ever, and quickeneth those faithful servants who continue true to him. For the time is now come, my dearest brethren, which our Lord foretold to us, and assured us would come, saying; *The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service: And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me: But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.* Nor should any one wonder at our being frequently teazed and afflicted with persecutions, since our Lord long ago foretold, that these things would happen in the latter times; and accordingly prepared us for the encounter, by seasonable encouragements, and by proper lessons: His apostle St. Peter hath likewise instructed us in the ends and reasons of persecutions, and told us, that they are sent to prove us, and to unite us more closely to the love of God, by death and suffering, according to the example of other righteous persons who have gone before us: For thus he hath said in his epistle; *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you; nor be astonished as though some strange thing had happened unto you: But as often as ye partake of Christ's sufferings, rejoice in all things; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; because the name of the majesty and power of God resteth on you; which on their part, indeed, is evil spoken of, but on your part is glorified.* Now the apostles in such passages as these, have only taught us what they learnt themselves, from the lessons of their heavenly master to them; who hath thus encouraged us, saying; *There is no man who hath left house or land, or parents, or brethren, or sisters, or wife or children for the kingdom of God's sake; who shall not receive seven times as much in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.* And again; *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and shall separate you from their company; and shall cast you out, and shall reproach your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven.* Our Lord would have us rejoice and leap for joy, in times of persecution; because then the crowns of our faith and constancy are given out; then the soldiers of Christ are approved, and then are the heavens opened to martyrs. For we did not lift our selves Christ's soldiers with the view of none but peaceable and settled times; nor ought we to decline or shrink from the encounter, which our Lord, in his own Person, undertook before us; setting us, thereby, a pattern of meekness and resignation in suffering, exemplifying in his own practice, what he would have us to do, and suffering first for us, all those things, which he exhorted us to suffer after him. Let us always, my dearest brethren, bear in mind, that he who alone hath received all judgment from the Father, and who is coming accordingly to judge the world, hath already acquainted us with the measures of his judgment, and the tenour of his sentence, as having told and forewarn-

Luke 18. 29,
30.

Luke 6. 22, 23.

a 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13, 14. The little variations of our author, from our present reading of this passage, will easily be observed, and need not be farther noted.

c *Then are the heavens opened.* Besides what hath been noted often of the martyrs privilege, in having immediate access to paradise: our author might probably enough allude (as Rigaltius hath observed of him) to that passage in the martyrdom of St. Stephen, who said, *Behold I see the heavens opened.* Acts 7. 56.

according

q b

ed

ed us; that he *will confess those before his Father, who confess him; and deny those before his Father, who deny him here.* If indeed it were possible for us to escape death, we might the better be allowed to stand in fear of it: But since man is mortal, and therefore must die; we should embrace the opportunity which is put into our hands by a merciful providence, and should perform the duty of submitting to it with cheerfulness, having the recompence of immortality propounded to us for such our submission; nor should we be afraid of the fatal blow, who are so certainly entitled to a crown for our enduring it. Nor should any one, my dearest brethren, be disturbed at observing, that our people are dispersed, and ^f put to flight, by the fear and danger of persecution; at missing, in such case, the usual assemblies for publick worship, or not hearing ^g the bishop preach in them. At such a time 'tis impossible, that all should meet in the same place together; who must ^h rather be killed than kill. Whensoever any of our brethren shall, in such a juncture, happen to be separated from the rest of the flock, in body, but not in spirit; the melancholy circumstance of his flight should not be suffered to discourage him; nor should the solitude of the place, to which he may be driven for his retirement, in any manner deject him. He should never think himself alone who hath the company of Christ to solace him in his retreat; or who preserving the *temple of God* inviolate wherever he is, hath God along with him. So that if such an one in his flight should be murdered by wild beasts, or robbers; by hunger, or thirst; or should be cast away in his passage by sea; Christ all the while is a spectator, and witness of his soldier's conduct in any of these adventures, and will give him the recompence assigned to such as are persecuted to the death for his name's sake, and which he hath promised to make good to them *at the resurrection*. Nor is the honour of such an one's martyrdom at all disparaged, because he doth not suffer so publickly, nor among numbers; since the cause of his suffering is still the same, and he suffers either way for the sake of Christ. That one witness, who approves and crowns his martyrs, is sufficient proof of such a person's martyrdom.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.
Matt. 10. 32,
33.

1 Cor. 3. 16.

Luke 14. 14.

3. Let us follow, my dearest brethren, the pattern of righteous *Abel*; who, falling a sacrifice for righteousness sake, was the first person in the world who set the example of martyrdom. Let us imitate *Abraham*, the friend of God; who, in his zeal for the service of God, was content to offer up his son a victim to him without delay. Let us tread in the steps of those three gallant youths, *Ananias*, *Azarias*, and *Misael*; who, notwithstanding the tenderness of their age, and the disadvantage of their captivity (*Judea*, their country, being then conquered, and *Jerusalem* taken) proved too hard for the King, even in his own kingdom, through the mighty power of their faith; and accordingly being bid to worship the statue, which King *Nabuchodonosor* had made, they suffered not themselves to be wrought upon by the menaces of the King, nor by the flames to which he adjudged them, avowing the steadfastness of their faith in the following expressions; *O King Nabuchodonosor, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; for our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hands, O King; but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.* They, as their faith was great, believed that they might escape; but added (*and if not*) that the King might know, they were ready to lose

§. 3.
Examples of
godly men pro-
pounded, who
from the be-
ginning of the
world have
suffered mar-
tyrdom.

Dan. 3. 16,
17, 18.

^f Put to flight.] In this our author was less rigid than his master *Tertullian*, who disallowed of flight in times of persecution, and wrote against it. And indeed (as Bp. Fell observes upon the passage) he must have condemned his own practice, if he had been more severe.

^g The bishop preach.] The bishop, it must be confessed, did ordinarily preach in the mother church, or cathedral; but in his absence, his presbyters did it for him.

^h Rather be killed than kill.] Though the ends of government were then the same as now, and christians had then as much natural right to their lives and fortunes, as they have had since; yet they did not apprehend themselves at liberty to defend either, by resistance to lawful powers.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.

their lives in the cause of that God whom they worshipped. For it is this circumstance which magnifies the power of our faith, and the gallantry of our courage; to believe and know, that God *can* deliver us from the imminent danger of death, and at the same timeⁱ not to stand in fear of it, nor to flinch back from it; which is still the higher proof of our faith. They spoke undaunted in the full power of the Holy Ghost, illustrating the truth of what

Matt. 10. 19,
20.

our Lord hath since spoken in his gospel; *When they shall deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* He saith (we see) that what is fit for us to answer in our defence, shall be given us in the very instant from above; and that it will not be we who shall in that case speak, but the Spirit of God the Father; who never dividing nor separating himself from such as confess the name of Christ, speaketh in them, and^k is crowned with them. Thus when an attempt was made upon *Daniel*, to have forced him

Hist. Bel. 5.

upon the worship of the idol *Bel*, which the King and the people worshipped; he boldly stood up for the honour of his God, and said: *I worship none but the Lord my God, who created the heaven and the earth.* And what shall

2 Maccab. 7.

I say of those terrible torments which we read of the blessed martyrs enduring^l in the book of the *Maccabees*, and the punishments of the seven famous brethren, and of the mother encouraging her children in the midst of their torments? Are they not evidences of mighty courage, and of an uncommon faith? And do they not excite in us a desire of partaking in the triumphs and honours of their martyrdom? Or what shall we think of the prophets, whom the Holy Ghost inspired with the fore-knowledge of future events? Or what, of the apostles chosen by our Lord? Do not those righteous men, who were severally killed for righteousness sake, instruct us how to die in the same good cause? The birth of Christ was soon attended with the martyrdom of infants; and all the children, *from two years old and under*, were put to death for his sake. Though of an age too tender for the *struggle*, yet were they not judged unfit for the martyr's *crown*. To shew that the sufferers for Christ would be accounted innocent; innocent infants were put to death for him. No one, surely, can expect henceforwards, to be free from the danger of persecution; since persons in *their* circumstances were martyrs in it.

Matt. 2. 16.

§. 4.
That the passion of Christ was far beyond all examples.

4. But how unreasonable must it be in the case of christians, for the *servant* to decline those sufferings, which the *master* hath undergone before him; for *us* to suffer unwillingly for our *own* sins; when he who had *no* sin of his *own* hath suffered for *us*? The *Son of God* hath suffered, to *make* us the children of God; and yet the *son of man* is loth to suffer, in order to *continue* the *Son of God*. If we labour under the hatred of the world; Christ, before us, endured that hatred. If we are forced to fly from our habitations; if contempt and scorn be poured upon us, or if the rack and torture be our portion in this world; the Lord and maker of the world endured worse than all this, and hath accordingly warned us, saying; *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you: If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, and I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word which I said unto you; The servant is not greater than the Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.* Whatsoever our Lord and God hath taught to others, he first exemplified in his own practice; leaving

John 15. 18,
19, 20.

ⁱ Not to stand in fear of it.] A knowledge that God would actually deliver them, had not magnified their courage, in their contempt of death; but a knowledge that he only *could*, with an *uncertainty* whether he would, deliver them, was a proof of their courage, in not flinching from the danger.

^k Is crowned.] *Viz.* in the martyrdom of his servants; he being in them, is a partaker of their honours. So our author in a rhetorical strain!

^l In the book of the Maccabees.] This instance he insists upon more at large in the 11th §. of his exhortation to martyrdom.

thereby

thereby his disciples and followers without excuse, who should not do what they have learnt from him. Wherefore, my dearest brethren, none of you, I hope, will be so terrified with the fear of the approaching persecution, or with the coming of antichrist, who already hovers over us, as to be found in a defenceless posture; or unprepared with that spiritual armour, which we may find in the precepts, persuasions, and encouragements of the gospel.

5. Wherefore if antichrist is coming, our Lord will soon overtake him; if the enemy doth for the present ravage and lay waste; our Lord will not be long behind, but will soon be with us, to avenge our sufferings, and our blood. If the adversary threatens and rages, there is one who can deliver us out of his hands: He only deserves to be truly feared, whose wrath none can escape; and who hath directed us to this purpose, saying; *Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* And again; *He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.* And in the book of the Revelations he thus cautions us, saying; *If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead and in his hand; the same shall drink of the wine mixed in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb: And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever; and they shall have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image.*

6. Men are trained up by a course of discipline, for performing their part in the ^m secular games; and account it an high honour to them, if they happen to gain the prize in the presence of their Emperor, and before the people who are their spectators. Behold then, a far more excellent and glorious struggle, which hath an heavenly crown for the victor's prize, and where God is a spectator of our behaviour in it! And looking upon those whom he vouchsafes to make his children, he pleases himself with the delightful spectacle of their encounter! God and his Christ, and the holy angels (all) observe us contending earnestly in the good fight of faith. How great must then our honour and happiness be, to enter the lists in the presence of God, and to receive our crown at the hands of Christ our judge? Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us arm our selves with all our might, and prepare our selves for this engagement, by a purity of heart, a steadiness of faith, and an alacrity of courage. Let the camp of God move forth to the battel, which is denounced against us. Let such as have ⁿ hitherto stood their ground, arm themselves, lest they should lose all the effects of their former standing. Let such as have lapsed in the former persecution, arm themselves, that they may ^o recover their former loss: A sense of honour should animate the one, as shame and remorse should provoke the other to the battel. The apostle hath endeavoured to arm and prepare us for it, saying; *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers ^p of this world of darkness, against the ^q spirits of wickedness in heavenly places.* Wherefore, *put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day; that when ye have done all ye may stand: Having your loyns girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: Taking, moreover, the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.

§. 5.
That in the worst times of antichrist our Lord will come to our rescue.

Matt. 10. 28.

John 12. 25.

Revelat. 14.
9, 10, 11.

§. 6.
That the patience wherewith the contenders in the secular games strove for their prize, and the courage they exerted, should encourage christians to undergo the pains of martyrdom.

Ephes. 6. 12,
13, 14, 15,
16, 17.

^m Secular games.] Such as running, wrestling, cussing, &c. much in use with the Gentiles.

ⁿ Hitherto stood.] Viz. Did not lapse in the former persecution.

^o Recover their former loss.] Viz. By suffering valiantly for the name of Christ, which before they had, through cowardice, deserted.

^p Of this world of darkness.] Our author read the words transposed from the order they now stand in, *this world of darkness*, instead of *darkness of this world*.

^q Spirits of wickedness.] *Spiritus nequitia in caelestibus*, are our author's words.

A.D. 252.
EPIST. LVIII.

one; with the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. With this spiritual and heavenly armour of defence, let us secure our selves, that we may be able, in the evil day, successfully to stand against the threats of the devil. Let us put on the breast-plate of righteousness, that our breast may be secured against the darts of the enemy: And let our feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel; that so when the serpent shall be bruised, by our treading on him, he may not be able to bite nor hurt us. Let us bear the shield of faith courageously; under the protection of which, whatsoever the enemy shall dart at us may lose its force. And for the security of our heads, let us take the helmet of salvation, which will stop our ears against the rueful edicts; shut our eyes against the abominable shrines of the heathen deities; guard our foreheads, so as to preserve the sign of God inviolate; fortify our mouths, and thence enable our tongues victoriously to confess their Lord Christ. And finally, let us arm our right hands with the sword of the spirit, that they may boldly reject the fatal sacrifices; and being mindful of the eucharist, and the body of our Lord which they have received, let them embrace that only, as an earnest of the heavenly crown which they shall receive from him hereafter in recompence of their present gallantry.

§. 7.
That the consideration of a future reward is an ample encouragement to endure patiently all afflictions.

1 Cor. 2:9.

Rom. 8: 18.

7. O how great and glorious will be that day, my beloved brethren, when our Lord shall begin to recount his people, to enter in his heavenly judgment upon the examination of each man's merits, to turn the wicked into hell, to condemn our persecutors to the punishment of everlasting flames, and to give us the reward of our faith and piety! How unutterable will be the joy of our being admitted to the sight of God; to the honour of partaking with Christ our Lord God, the pleasures of everlasting light and salvation; to the privilege of saluting and associating with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs; to rejoyce in the pleasures of that immortality which will be then assigned us, together with righteous persons, and the friends of God, in the kingdom of heaven; there to receive what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man! For that we shall there receive far beyond any thing which we have done, or suffered here, the apostle hath expressly declared, where he saith; that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. When that revelation shall be made, and the glory of God shall shine upon us; we then shall be as joyful and happy in the honour which God vouchsafes us, as they will continue obnoxious to guilt and punishment, who have forsaken God, or rebelled against him, and done the will of the devil, so as to make it necessary for them to suffer together with him in unquenchable fire. Let these things, my beloved brethren, make a deep impression upon all our hearts. Let this be our defensive armour; let us dwell upon this consideration day and night, and keep it, as it were, before our eyes, and within the ken of all our senses, how the wicked are to be punished, and the righteous rewarded: What dreadful menaces our Lord hath denounced against such as deny him; and what glorious promises he hath given to such as confess him. If the day of persecution shall find us employed in these meditations; the soldier of Christ thus trained up to his discipline,

[Rueful edicts.] Viz. The commands of the magistrate to christians, ordering them to sacrifice.

[Sign of God.] This, I think, must mean the sign of the cross, received at baptism. See note [de-fensive sign] in §. 16. of the 2^d book of testimonies, with the other passages there referred to.

[Which they have received.] Priorius (saith our most learned editor) observes, that our author here alludes to the manner of receiving the bread, or body of our Lord; which was then put into the hands of the laity; not, as now by the Romanists, into their mouths. And Rigaltius quotes Ambrose of the sacraments, b. 4. ch. 2. thus expressing himself; The priest saith, the body of our Lord; and you say, Amen. That is, true: Embrace then with your affections, what you thus confess with your tongues.

[Far beyond.] So that what he had just mentioned of our Lord's entering upon the examination of each person's merits, is not to be construed of strict merit, entitling to the recompence; but only of a, comparatively, good behaviour.

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and instructed in his doctrine, and fortified with his encouragements, will be so far from dreading the engagement, that he will be perfectly well prepared for earning and receiving the crown of victory. My dearest brethren, I bid you heartily farewell.

A. D. 252.
Epist. LVIII.



EPISTLE LIX.

Written after
his return.

Whilst the council was sitting at Carthage in the month of May; Privatus, formerly bishop of Lambæsa in Numidia, but condemned and deposed some years ago by ninety bishops for diverse crimes, came to Carthage in company with some of his associates; and pretended, that he would submit his cause to the determination of the council at that time, and in that place assembled: But being rejected there, he ventured upon a very bold and insolent enterprize; and ordained Fortunatus (one of our author's five schismatical presbyters) a bishop of Carthage, in opposition to him. Fortunatus was no sooner ordained, than he sent his agents to Rome, with notice of it, to see if he could thence obtain letters of communion, according to the custom of that age, in the correspondence of bishops one with another. Felicissimus, the old enemy of St. Cyprian, was at the head of this embassy; whom Cornelius, then bishop of Rome, immediately rejected, with all his company; and dispatched away a letter upon it to our author, very agreeable to his own character, and to the rules of good discipline and brotherly love; but this letter is not extant. Upon this repulse, Felicissimus and his party were enraged; invented diverse false stories of our author; affirmed, that Fortunatus was ordained in the presence of twenty-five bishops, and so threatened Cornelius, that he began to stagger: Whereupon he wrote another letter to our author, which is likewise lost; blaming him for not returning an answer to his former epistle, and for not giving him any account of this same Fortunatus. Towards the latter end of June the persecution began, and our author wrote this answer to both these letters of Cornelius, thanking him for the significations he had given him, in the first, of his rejecting Fortunatus, and excusing himself, as to the second, by the delay of Felicianus; whom our author had sent to Cornelius, though he did not, it seems, arrive in time. About this time also, our author wrote his exhortation to martyrdom; both a little after his writing the former letter to the people of Thibaris.

* Bishop of Carthage.] This was the common way; no one then pretended, or thought it possible to succeed in a pretence, to propagate heresy, or schism, without obtaining episcopal ordination, and so addressing to the people under some colour of right; which hath accordingly been observed as a reason (in my dissertation upon that subject) why the case of schismatical baptisms, which was debated in the council of Carthage, cannot be brought as a perfect parallel to any modern case: Because there, tho' the baptisms were indeed schismatical, yet they were episcopal. By the way, therefore, it doth not certainly appear from any thing there produced, whether the church would have admitted, or utterly rejected such baptisms, as were perfectly anti-episcopal.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



Have perused the letter you sent to me, my dearest brother, by my waiter and brother ^b *Saturus*; which breaths, all over, a spirit of brotherly love, of ecclesiastical discipline, and a just regard to the honour of your episcopal function: In it you signify to me, that you have rejected *Felicissimus*, an old enemy of Christ's, and who was accordingly excommunicated for many grievous crimes committed by him; standing condemned not ^c by my single sentence only, but of very many of our colleagues likewise. You inform me farther, that when he came in great pomp to you, attended with his factious crew of desperado's; you expelled him from the church, with a firmness and vigour becoming your office and character: He was, indeed, before cast out of it, with others like himself, by the ^d majesty of God, and the just severity of Christ our Lord and judge; that it might never be said the ringleader of a schism, one who had broken his trust, by converting to his own use a sum of money lodged with him, a defiler of virgins, and an infamous invader of the matrimonial bed, should have it in his power to corrupt the chaste and holy spouse of Christ, by being suffered to continue with her, and to spread upon her the foul infection of his poyson.

§. 2.

He replies to
the second letter
of Corne-
lius.

2. But I must confess, dear brother, that I was a good deal surprized at reading your second letter, to find by it, that you had been staggered at the threats and menaces of those messengers who were sent from hence to you; intimating, (as you tell me they did) in a desperate manner, that if you would not receive the letters they brought with them, they would get them read in publick; and, together with them, would produce many scandalous stories, fit for no mouths but their own to utter. Now, my dear brother, if the case be so, that we must be intimidated by the confidence of wicked men; and what they cannot obtain by right and reason, they shall be allowed to accomplish by meer dint of impudence and bold attempts; there is an end, at once, of our episcopal authority, and of that sublime and heavenly power wherewith we are entitled to govern the church; nay, indeed, of christianity it self, if things are come to this pass with us, that the attempts and menaces of such profligate wretches shall be permitted to disconcert us: For the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and Hereticks; and indeed all manner of persons, in whom the devil hath an interest, take this way of spreading their poyson, and of venting their rage and fury; yet we must not give way to them; nor is the enemy, therefore, greater than Christ, because his pretensions are so clamorous, and he assumes so much to himself in the affairs of the world. The power of our faith, my dearest brother, should not be moved nor weakned by any such attempts; nor should the roaring waves be suffered to make the least impressions upon the firmness of our purposes; but should be beat off by our courage, ^e as by a rock opposed to them. Nor is it very material to a bishop, from what quarter he is attacked or threatned; who must always expect to live amidst dangers and terrors, and to raise his honour out of them. Nor are we only to

^b *Saturus*.] 'Tis very probable, that this is that *Saturus*, of whose ordination we have notice in epistle 29; and who is also mentioned in epistles 32, and 35. Bp. Fell.

^c *By my single sentence*.] When our author was in his retirement, *Felicissimus* was condemned by order from him, which was signified by *Caldonius*, *Herculanus*, *Victor*, and others; afterwards, by the *African* fathers in their first synod, held after his return, and again in the next. Bp. Fell.

^d *Majesty of God, and the just severity of Christ*.] Observe here what an authority St. Cyprian ascribes to the censures of the church. Thus the apostle in 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. with great solemnity directs the *Corinthians*; *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his own Spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto satan.*

^e *As by a rock*.] This is an allusion to Matt. 7. 25. Bp. Fell.

consider or expect the menaces of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to us; since we find our Lord laid hold of, even by his friends and brethren, and betrayed by one of his apostles whom himself had chosen; since, even in the infancy of the world, righteous *Abel* was killed by his own brother; since *Jacob* was pursued in his flight by his angry brother, and young *Joseph* was sold by his brethren; and we read it foretold in the gospel, that a man's foes shall be chiefly they of his own household; and that they who should be linked together in the most sacred bonds of unity and love, would be the persons most apt to betray each other. Nor is it, I say, a matter of any consideration, who is the person betraying, or raging against us; when God is pleased that they should be betrayed, whom he hath a mind to crown. Nor is it in any manner a reproach upon us to suffer from our brethren, what Christ hath suffered before us; any more than it is an honour to them to do, what a *Judas* hath done before them. Mean while how absurd and insolent is it in them to cast forth their menaces at me there, in my absence, when they have me here present, and may do their worst? But as for their calumnies, with which they more hurt themselves than me, I regard them not; nor am I moved with the threats which they so unnaturally give out, of clubs, and swords, and stones, and what not? As much as lies in themselves, they are murderers before God; and yet they cannot accomplish their bloody purposes, except God permits them actually to murder. And tho' I can die but once; yet they, if words, or will, or villanous attempts would do it, would daily kill me.

3. But we, my dear brother, must not depart from the rules of ecclesiastical discipline; nor weaken the force of episcopal censures, because we are attacked with menaces or reproaches; since the holy scriptures have here interposed, and told us; *That the man who is proud, and doth presumptuously, whose soul is lifted up, and who enlargeth his desire as hell, shall accomplish nothing.* And again; *Fear not the words of a sinful man, for his glory shall be dung and worms. To day he shall be lifted up, and to morrow he shall not be found; because he is returned into his dust, and his thought is come to nothing.* And again; *I have seen the wicked in great power exalted above the cedars of Libanus; I passed by, and lo he was not; I sought him, but his place could not be found.* Arrogance, and pride, and all haughty behaviour, come not from the lessons of Christ, who teacheth humility; but from the Spirit of antichrist, whom our Lord, by the prophet, hath upbraided, saying; *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the height of the mountains, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high.* To which he hath subjoined; *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the very foundations of the earth; they that see thee shall wonder at thee.* Against such men as these the holy scriptures have elsewhere denounced the like punishment, saying; *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one who is proud and lofty, and upon every one who is lifted up and doth wrong.*

4. Every one is soon discovered by his words, and is betrayed out of his own mouth, whether he hath Christ, or antichrist in his heart; according to an hint which our Lord hath given us in his gospel, saying; *O generation of vipers, how can ye being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil*

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.
Mark 3. 21.
Matt. 26. 16.
Gen. 4. 8.
Gen. 32. 6.
Gen. 37. 28.
Matt. 10. 36.

§. 3.
A severe censure of the proud, and such as disobey their bishop.
Habak. 2. 5.
1 Macc. 2. 62.

Psal. 38. 35.

Isai. 14. 13.

Y. 15. 16.

Isai. 2. 12.

§. 4.

Every one is betrayed and discovered by his own words.
Matt. 11. 34.

[Sacred bonds of unity.] Sacramento unanimitalis. We see here the latitude of the word sacrament, as used by the Latin fathers, and how little the Romanists can justly infer from it. It was, in a manner, as extensive in its signification with them, as any thing sacred.
[Shall accomplish nothing.] The Arabic version is the only one which reads this with our author; the rest read it, shall never be satisfied.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.
Luke 16. 24.

1 Cor 6. 10.

Matt. 5. 22.

Deut 17. 12.
13.

1 Sam. 8. 7.

Luke 10. 16.

Matt. 8. 4.

John 18. 22.

1. 23.

Act. 23. 4.

v. 5.

§. 5.

That heresies
arise in the
church, be-
cause the bi-
shop is not o-
beyed in it.

treasure, bringeth forth evil things. And thus that wicked rich man, who begged aid of *Lazarus*, seated in *Abraham's* bosom, and in a place of refreshment, when he was tormented (himself) in burning flames, had his mouth and tongue more particularly punished than any other parts of his body; because with his mouth and tongue he had more particularly offended: For since it is written; That *revilers shall not inherit the kingdom of God*; and, that *whosoever shall say to his brother, Racha, and thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire*? how shall they escape the vengeance of God, who not only so revile their brethren, but even their bishops; to whom God hath vouchsafed the grant of so much honour, that whosoever should not here obey his priest, or judge, for the time being, should presently be slain? The Lord God thus speaks in the book of *Deuteronomy*; *The man who will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, or unto the judge, who shall be in those days, even that man shall die: And all the people, when they hear it, shall fear, and shall do no more wickedly.* To *Samuel*, like-
wise, when the Jews despised him, God thus spake; *They have not despised thee, but they have despised me.* And our Lord in the gospel thus expresseth himself; *He who beareth you, beareth me; and he who beareth me, beareth him who sent me: He who despiseth you, despiseth me; and he who despiseth me, despiseth him who sent me.* And when he had cleansed the leper, he saith; *Go shew thy self to the priests.* And afterwards, when at the time of his passion, he received a blow from a servant of the high priest, saying to him; *Answerest thou the high priest so?* Our Lord, in his reply, spoke nothing of the high priest contumeliously; nor did he endeavour to lessen any part of the honour due to him; but only proceeded in asserting and insisting on his own innocence, saying; *If I have spoken evil, you might upbraid me with it; but if well, why smitest thou me?* Afterwards, when it was objected to the blessed apostle *St. Paul*, by some who stood by, saying; *Re- vilest thou God's high priest?* Though after having crucified our Lord, they had contracted the guilt of murder, profaneness, and impiety, and so had forfeited their title to all the honours of their sacerdotal function; yet *St. Paul* bearing some respect, even to that empty name and shadow of a priest, replied in his own excuse; *I will not that he was the high priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.*

§. 5. Since then we have so many precedents and examples before us, of God's being pleased to assert and confirm the honours and powers of the priestly function; what character must they be thought deserving, who set themselves up in avowed opposition to their priests; and rise in rebellion against the catholic church, and are not affrighted from their bold attempt, either by the menaces of our Lord, or by the terrors of his future vengeance? For in very truth, heresies and schisms have no other rise than this, that no obedience is paid to the bishop; nor is it considered, that there is but one bishop at a time in a church, and one judge at a time, who sits there in Christ's stead: Whom, if all our brethren would obey, as they ought to do; no one would be found so hardy as to take a step against the whole college of bishops;

^b *He who beareth me, beareth him who sent me.* These words are wanting in our present editions: the some MSS. read them.

^c *You might upbraid me with it.* See this cited and noted in epistle 3. §. 1.

^d *Had forfeited their title.* The priestly character was not deleted, by the personal faults of him who wore it: But, indeed, the whole Jewish economy, and, with it, the priesthood, were abolished after the crucifixion of Christ, and the mission of the Holy Ghost, for establishing a new one.

^e *As a time.* *Ad tempus.* *Rigaltus* saith, that this may signify, for the present time, till Christ cometh (himself) to judgment. I suppose it may as well, and properly, signify, but one bishop at one time; which had a particular respect to his own case; since *Fortunatus* was ordained bishop in opposition to him; and the disobedience to this one bishop, was, in truth and fact, the rise of most heresies and schisms.

^f *The whole college of bishops.* All consenting to the ordination of that one bishop; so that they who made any attempt upon that one, made it, in effect, upon all the rest, who did not concur to his deprivation.

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after the divine determination, after the suffrages of the people, and the consent of our colleagues, no one would presume to set up for a judge, I say, not of his bishop, but even of God himself; no one would endeavour, by a breach of her unity, to divide the church of Christ; no one would take such pride and pleasure in his own doings, as to separate himself, and form a new heresy without her pale; unless he can be so weak as to imagine, that a bishop is made, at any time, without the concurrence of God's authority, notwithstanding that our Lord hath said in his gospel; *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without the will of your Father.* Now when he saith, that even things of the least account do not come to pass without the will of God; can any man persuade himself, that things of the highest consequence are done in his church, without his knowledge or permission? Or that bishops, who are his stewards, are made without his appointment? This is a manifest want of that faith, by which we are said to live; this is to rob God of his honour, by whose direction and disposal we believe and know that all things are governed. Indeed those bishops who are ordained out of the church, are not made so by the will of God; but directly against, and in defiance of, his ordinance; as our Lord himself, in the twelve prophets, hath plainly hinted, saying; *They have set up Kings, but not by me.* And again; *Their sacrifices shall be as the bread of mourning; all who eat thereof shall be polluted.* The Holy Ghost hath likewise exclaimed, by the mouth of *Isaiah*, against such proceedings, and said; *Wo to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, ye have taken counsel, but not of me; and have made a covenant, but not by my Spirit, that ye might add sin to sin.*

D. A. 252.
Epistle LIX.

Matt. 10. 29.

Habak. 2. 4.

Hos. 8. 4.

Hos. 9. 4.

Isai. 30. 1.

6. Give me leave to proceed, and add what I must say upon great provocation, with much unwillingness, and by direct compulsion: When a bishop succeeds in the room of one deceased, is chosen in a time of peace, and is protected thro' the particular assistances of God, from the dangers of persecution; when he is cordially united to the whole college of bishops, approved to his people in the exercise of his function, by an experience of him during the space of four years; in quiet times endeavouring to maintain the discipline of the church, and outlawed in times of distress and trouble, under the express character of his office; so often called for to the lions, in the circus, and in the amphitheater, honoured by providence with these several testimonies of his office and character; even very lately, and during the time wherein I have been writing this letter to you, called for again to the lions, by the clamours of the people; upon occasion of the sacrifices, which by

§. 6.

Our author
apologizes for
himself.

After the divine determination.] It hath already been more than once observed, that what was regularly done in the church, was ratified by God. Here, then, our author shews, that all had been regularly done, as to the ordination of this one bishop; which, therefore, was ratified by God, and could not be annulled by any after practice, whilst that bishop made no forfeiture; so that here he rises in his argument; and as he had said before, that whoever should make an attempt upon this one bishop, made it, in effect, upon the whole college of bishops; so now he advances, and saith, that they would be construed to make an attempt, even upon God himself, whose ratification they should offer to none, without any pretence of an incapacity in the person, or of his deprivation by a just authority.

Twelve prophets.] Viz. Those whom we call the minor prophets, and whose writings the Jews esteemed as one book. Bp. Fell.

When a bishop succeeds.] Here our author shews how unreasonable these factious practices against him were, considering that he had all the qualifications which were requisite to keep him in his post with honour.

During the space of four years.] Therefore he was ordained in the year 248.

Under the express character.] Calling him by name, a bishop of the christians, and as such prohibiting him.

Circus and in the amphitheater.] Places in Rome for the people to see the spectacles therein exhibited; and there were like places resembling them in Carthage, as hath been observed in note [xviii. f. 10. tables] upon the tract to Donatus, §. 9.

Honoured, by providence, with these several testimonies.] Viz. being called upon, as a christian bishop to punishment; so that he had even the testimony of enemies owning his character, which *scilicet* friends denied to him.

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A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

2 Tim. 3. 1.

John 16. 2.

John 6. 67.

† 68, 69.

Matt. 15. 13.

1 John 2. 19.

Rom. 3. 3, 4.

§. 7.

The men are
perverse, the
bishops must be
careful that
none fall off
from the
church thro'
their fault.

edict from court, they were commanded to offer: I say, my dear brother, when one in *these circumstances* is opposed by a set of desperate and abandoned wretches from without the church; it will not bear a question, who is *the opponent*, Christ, we are sure, it cannot be, who always either *apoints* his bishops, or, however, *protects* them; but an *enemy* of Christ, and of his church; who, for this reason, raises all the trouble he can to its bishop, that, when the governour is taken from it, he may ravage it with the less controul. Nor should any one, who is true to its interest, and is mindful of the gospel, and remembers what the apostle hath foretold of this matter, be in any manner startled, if in the *last days*, certain proud persons, enemies to the priests of God, forsake his church, or act against it: Since both our Lord and his apostles, have given us reason, beforehand, to expect such a behaviour from them. Nor should any one be surprized at observing, that the bishop, who is but a *servant*, should be forsaken by certain persons; since the *master* himself was *deserted* by his disciples, tho' he performed such great wonders, and shewed forth the power of God his Father in them: Yet did not he upbraid them when they were leaving him, or give out any severe menaces against them; but only turning to his apostles, asked them; *Will ye also go away?* Therein preserving the law inviolate, whereby man is left to his liberty *of chusing* for himself either death or salvation. But St. *Peter*, upon whom our Lord built his church, taking upon himself to answer for the rest, and, as it were, in the name of the church, replied, saying; *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that thou art the Son of the living God.* In which passage he hath strongly hinted to us, that they who depart from Christ, are lost thro' their own fault; but that the church which believeth in Christ, and which holdeth fast that which it is once *sure* of, never finally departeth from him: That they are properly the church, who continue in the house of God; and that they are the *plant not planted by God the Father*, whom we see not fastned, like the true corn, to the ground; but tossed about like chaff, or loose straw, with every wind of the enemy who endeavours to scatter them. Concerning such persons St. *John* hath said in his epistle; *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* And St. *Paul* forewarns us not to be concerned, nor to let our faith be staggered, when wicked men, and renegadoes fall off from the church, and forsake her; *For what if some have fallen from the faith? Hath their unbelief made the faith of God of none effect? God forbid! for God is true, and every man a liar.*

7. As for our selves, dear brother, we must be careful, that none fall away from the church, thro' any fault of ours; but if any by their own choice, and thro' their own fault miscarry, and refuse to do penance, and to return into the church; *we*, who consult their safety, shall be blameless in the day of judgment; whilst they only shall remain obnoxious to punishment, who would nor hearken to our wholsom counsel, nor make any use of it, in order to their cure. Nor ought the reproaches of any desperate wretches to warp us from the just and proper rule of procedure with them; since the apostle hath

The opponents. He who was so, under the several circumstances here represented, was, unquestionably, the schismatick; nor could it be a doubt, under whose auspices he acted, those of Christ, or of his enemy.

Deserted by his disciples. Viz. Upon their not comprehending that hard saying of John 6. 53. concerning their eating his flesh.

Of chusing for himself. Nothing can be more expreis in favour of an human agent's liberty, than this passage.

Hath their unbelief. So our author, with some of the *Latin* fathers; between *evacuavit* and *evacuabit*, there is only the difference of one letter to make it either the *preterperfect*, or the *future tense*.

God is true. The original reads it, *let God be true.*

hinted a very seasonable caution to us, saying; *If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* There is a vast difference between endeavouring to please *men*, and to please *God*. If we please *men*, *God* is often offended; but if we truly labour to please *God*; we should never regard the reproaches nor the slanders of *men*.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.
Galat. 1. 10.

8. As for my not writing to you, dear brother, immediately, about the case of the pretended bishop *Fortunatus*, ordained by a few obstinate hereticks; I could not think it a matter of such moment, or so formidable, as to make it necessary for me to dispatch away an express upon it, in haste, or suddenly; especially since you was already no stranger to the name of *Fortunatus*; he being one of those five presbyters, who some time ago were driven from the church, and excommunicated by diverse of our colleagues, men of undoubted name and character, who notified what they had done to you by letter the last year; nor did I question but that you were acquainted also with *Feliciſſimus*, the ringleader of this faction; who was likewise comprehended in the account which was hence transmitted to you, by our forementioned colleagues; and was excommunicated by them here, as well as rejected by you at *Rome*. Now when I had so much reason to believe you acquainted with these several things and persons; and did not doubt but that they had made a sufficient impression upon your memory; and that you would act in this whole matter agreeably to your former practice, and to the rules of good discipline; I thought it less requisite to be much in haste, or very solicitous about sending to you a circumstantial detail of heretical trifles; it scarce comporting with the majesty and dignity of the catholic church, to take much notice of any insolent attempts which shall happen to be made by hereticks and schismatics. For *Novatian's* partisans have pretended (I hear) to ordain *Maximus* the presbyter, their bishop in our parts; who was sent hither by *Novatian* as his agent, and by me rejected from communion, and yet I did not think it worth while to write you an account of this, because indeed I despise all such attempts; and I had lately^b sent you a list of those bishops, who here are sound and uncorrupted, and govern their brethren within the pale of the catholic church: And this was done, by common concert, that you might, at one view, distinguish the right from the wrong, and truth from falsehood; and both your self, and our colleagues with you, might thence be instructed, both whom to write to, and from whom to receive^c letters: And if any other bishop, besides those whose names were contained in my epistle to you, should presume to write to you, you might be sure he was either a sacrificer, or a^d libellatick, or else an heretick; and so a person unfit to be corresponded with. However, since an opportunity now presents it self, of writing by a friend^e and a clergyman; among other things which I judged it proper to acquaint you with, I have also inserted this account of *Fortunatus*, and dispatched it by your waiter *Felicianus*, whom you had sent hither with our colleague *Persens*: But whilst our brother *Felicianus* was either detained by contrary winds, or waited for some other letters; he was prevented by *Feliciſſimus's* getting to you before him. For wickedness always makes haste; as if by getting the start of innocence, it might hope to succeed against it:

§. 8.
An account of
the ordination
of Fortunatus,
his rival bishop;
and the reason
why he sent
no sooner to
Cornelius.

^a Ringleader.] He joined himself with *Privatus*, as well as with *Novatus*; whose two parties in *Africa* seemed to have made a coalition, and to have combined together, that they might be the stronger against St. Cyprian, the common enemy of all hereticks and schismatics.

^b Sent you a list.] *Viz.* in epistle 57. see the inscription of it.

^c Letters.] *Viz.* letters of communion; which was the way wherein the bishops of different sees maintained communion with each other.

^d Libellatick.] This sort of people we have already noted in diverse preceding passages of our author's works; particularly in note [scandalous subscriptions] in §. 3. epist. 30. and note [owned himself the deer] in §. 14. of the case of the lapsed.

^e And a clergyman.] All correspondences between bishops, were to be carried on by clergymen; as our author hath observed in his 29th epistle, upon the ordination of *Saburus*.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

Now by this *Felicianus* I notified to you, that *Privatus*, an old heretick, was come to *Carthage*, that he had been condemned by the sentence of ninety bishops in *Lambesa*, for many heinous crimes; and stood branded (as you know) moreover, by the letters of our predecessors, *Fabian* and *Donatus*; and that this man, when he pretended that he would submit his cause to the cognizance of the council which was held here upon the 13th of *May*, and found himself rejected, ordained *Fortunatus* bishop against me, one every way worthy to sit in the same college with himself. There accompanied him also one *Felix*, whom he had likewise ordained a (pretended) bishop, out of the church, and in a state of heresy. There came, moreover, with the heretick *Privatus*; *Maximus* and *Jovinus*; who stood condemned by the sentence of nine bishops, our colleagues, for joining in the heathen sacrifices, and for diverse other crimes which were proved upon them; and this sentence against them was repeated and confirmed afterwards by us last year, in a more numerous council. With these four was joined *Repostus* of *Suturnica*; who not only lapsed (himself) in the late persecution, but drew a great number of his people along with him into the same snare. These five, with a few sacrificers, and other wicked persons, have chosen *Fortunatus* for their pretended bishop; who, from the similitude of their crimes, are fittest to associate; *he*, to be *their* governour, and *they*, to be *his* subjects. Hence, my dear brother, you may form an estimate of those other stories, which these profligate and abandoned people have spread about in your parts; for when there were in all but five (pretended) bishops who came to *Carthage* (taking in both sorts of them, as well those who had been tainted with the guilt of sacrificing, as those who had quitted the church for heresy) and these five were the only persons who concurred in ordaining *Fortunatus* an associate of their crimes; yet, as you write me word, those wretches, who are come over to you, like children of the devil, dress up a story full of falsehoods, and have the assurance to boast, that five and twenty bishops were there present: This they first pretended amongst our brethren here, that five and twenty bishops would come hither out of *Numidia* to ordain a bishop for them; and when, to their great confusion, they were detected in this forgery, by the coming of five only; and those, men of a vile character, who had been excommunicated by us; away they presently sailed for *Rome*, and carried off with them their wretched wares of forgeries and lyes; as if the truth would not soon overtake them, with a full confutation of their stories and fictions. This now, brother, is the greatest absurdity in the world, which they are guilty of; not to consider, that lyes do not long impose upon any one; that the darkness of the night continues no longer, than till the day light scatters it; which then gives way, and vanishes, when the sun arises; and then the cheats and robberies which had the advantage of the night to cover them, are no longer practised. Finally, if you do but ask them the names of their five and twenty (pretended) bishops, they will not be able to answer you, nor to give you upon the sudden so many names, even tho' they should take the liberty to count them; such a lucky scarcity there happens to be, even of bad men amongst them, that they cannot name five and twenty persons, from the united number of sacrificers and hereticks together, who are joined with them. And yet, that they may impose upon strangers, who mean honestly, they magnify this number by downright fiction: As if, supposing the truth of their assertions,

[*Fabian* and *Donatus*.] Hence *Baronius* conjectures, that, as *Fabian* was predecessor of pope *Cornelius*, so *Donatus* was of pope *Cyprian*: But our author calls this very *Cornelius*, and *Lucius*, in a letter to pope *Stephen* (No 68.) his own and *Stephen's* predecessors; who yet were confessedly bishops of *Rome*; so that how probable soever the cardinal's conjecture may be, it carries no certain consequence.
[*Suturnica*.] As the MSS. differ in reading this name, which is scarce to be found elsewhere; bishop *Felix* inclines to follow the *Lambeth* reading, and so would have it *Repostus Uninnensis*; of which there is mention in chap. 123. *Callat*, *Carthage*, and *Octavius* is recited as bishop of that people.

the church could be overborn by *heresy*, or *right* by *wrong*. I must not, however, my dearest brother, imitate their practices; nor run you into the detail of their manifold miscarriages; since we should here consider what is fit to come from the mouth, or the pen of bishops; nor should we, in this case, consult our resentments; but should rather be governed by the rules of modesty and decency, in what we allow our selves to say of them. Wherefore I shall not enlarge upon their cheating the church, nor upon their factious brigues, nor upon their violations of the marriage-bed, nor upon other (various) enormities, whereof they have been guilty: Yet there is one thing, which (because it is not my own, nor the cause of any man besides, but of God) ought not, I think, to be passed in silence; and this is, that from the very first moment of the persecution, when every day produced amongst us some instances or other of persons defiling themselves with forbidden practices; when not only the altars of the devil were continually smoking with abominable sacrifices; but even the hands and mouths of our lapsed brethren, were steaming fresh with them; these men^b forbore not to communicate with the lapsed, nor ever desisted from their pernicious interposals to hinder them, as far as they were able, from submitting to penance for their grievous sin.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

9. God hath proclaimed, saying; *He that sacrificeth to any gods, save unto the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.* And again our Lord hath expressly pronounced upon this case in his gospel; *Whosoever shall deny me, him will I deny.* And elsewhere our Lord ceases not to testify his resentments against such-like practices, saying; *To these hast thou poured a drink-offering, and to these hast thou offered a meat offering; and shall I not be angry at these things?* Yet these men do all they can to prevent any prayer being put up to God, who hath thus proclaimed his indignation: They use their utmost endeavours, that Christ may not be reconciled by prayers or penitential labours; who yet hath declared, that he will deny those who deny him. For my own part, I sent them my opinion by letter in the very heat of all the persecution; but this was not regarded. In diverse synods held upon this occasion, I not only concurred with my *advice*; but pointed the synodical decree with *menaces* and *threats*; that our brethren, in these circumstances, should submit to penance, and that no one should presume to admit them to communion without it: Yet these men, notwithstanding, in defiance of God, and in avowed opposition to the authority of his bishops; not only forsaking the church, but taking up impious arms against her (to perfect their work with diabolical malice) use all possible means to prevent the mercies of God from curing those within his church, who have received a wound in the late encounter; they labour to pervert and mangle the repentance of those unhappy people by artful pretences; that so the wrath of God may never be appeased; that he who was either ashamed, or afraid of owning his christian profession, may not seek after Christ his Lord; nor he return to the church, who had forsaken it. All arts are employed, that the sins committed by the lapsed, may not be expiated by a just and proper course of penitential satisfactions. And thus the real peace of the church is lost, by a vain pretence to it; and the *step-mother* shuts up from her children, the bosom of the *natural*, by stopping their sighs and tears, which alone can open it. The lapsed are, moreover, taught to revile their bishops with that very mouth and tongue, which had just before^c of-

§. 9.
That they hinder penance who admit any persons to communion without it, if obnoxious to it.
Exod. 22. 20.
Matt. 10. 33.
Isai. 57. 6.

^b Forbore not to communicate with the lapsed.] And yet (as Bp. Fell observes of them) they forbore not afterwards to make it one of their pretences for separating from the church, that she defiled her self by communicating with these lapsed.

^c Step-mother.] *Viz.* They who by pretending to give the peace of the church (the natural mother) upon improper terms, withheld the real benefactions of that mother from the persons, to whom they seemingly distributed her favours with such profuseness.

^d Offended in the capitol.] That was the place where the magistrate sat, before whom they denied their religion.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

Isai. 29. 10.

2 Thess. 2. 11,
12.

Mal. 2. 1, 2.

fended in the capitol; to shed the venom of their reproaches upon the confessors and ¹virgins; all indeed, who are of distinguished name and reputation in the church, for their faith and virtue; which yet affects not so much the character of our people, as it hurts *themselves*, and endangers *their own* hope: For the inventor and publisher of a slander receives more damage from it, than the person at whom 'tis levelled; nor is he the offender who is *smitten* by his brother, but he who *smites him*; so that in the case of injuries, he who thinks he *commits* them, is, in truth and reality, most a *sufferer* from them. Hence, indeed, such men are judicially infatuated: and, 'tis the effect of God's wrath against them, that they have no sense of their sins, which should lead them to repentance; as it is written, *The Lord hath poured out upon them the spirit^m of deep sleep, viz.* that they might not return, and be healed, and find their cure in a course of penitential labours. The apostle St. Paul hath laid it down as his observation upon this sort of men, saying of them in his epistle; *They received not the love of truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye; that they all might beⁿ judged, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* It is the *greatest* felicity not to offend at all; but the *second* step, is to acknowledge our offences, when we have committed them. If, in the *one* case, we have our innocence to secure us; we have, in the *other*, a medicine to heal us; of both which these people are deprived when they have offended God; they not only lose the grace, to which their baptismal sanctification had entitled them; but they miss, likewise, of the helps and advantages they might derive from penance, which is the proper cure for them. Do you think, brother, upon the whole, that they are guilty of a *small* offence against God; thro' whose means it comes to pass, that his majesty is not implored, nor his anger deprecated? That no regard is had to his wrath, nor to that consuming fire which shall be kindled in the day of the Lord? That when antichrist is just approaching, the faith of God's people is disarmed in the very article of danger, by weakening their fear of Christ, and of his discipline? Let the laity look to this matter as they can; but, upon us of the clergy 'tis, I'm sure, incumbent, to be careful, that the majesty of God be duly supplicated, and his honour vindicated, lest any criminal neglect be charged upon us; especially since our Lord hath thus admonished us, saying; *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you: If ye will not hear, and will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, saith the Lord; I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings.* But now is glory given to God, when the majesty of his government is so slighted? When notwithstanding that he hath denounced his anger against such as shall pollute themselves with sacrifice, and hath menaced them with an everlasting punishment; these prophane wretches shall contradict him, and say; "Think not of God's wrath, have no regard to his judgment, stand not knocking at the doors of the church; let there be no penance, no solemn confession of your crime; but without the least deference to your bishops, or to their authority, let your presbyters proclaim a (deceitful) peace to you; and, lest the lapsed should ever rise again from their fall, or those who are once *out* of the church, should ever again come *into* it; let those, who (themselves) have no right to communion, be the persons from whom you receive it!" Nor were these people at last content with departing from the rules of the gospel;

¹ *Virgins.*] See notes [*virgins*, and *devoted themselves*] in §. 3. of the habit of virgins; where they are considered as a distinct order of people, tho' without any dangerous restraints upon them from marrying, if they changed their purpose. See likewise note [1 Cor. 7.] in §. 32. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

^m *Of deep sleep.*] *Transpunctionis*, saith our author, literally following the the-LXX's *κατανύστα*, which in Rom. 11. 8. is interpreted *deep slumber*.

ⁿ *Judged.*] *Judicentur*; which is a literal version of the original *κρίθῃσιν* and sounds not quite so harsh as our common English translation.

with

with defrauding the lapsed of the advantages they might have drawn from penitential satisfactions; with erasing from the minds of persons tainted with the guilt of various frauds, adulteries, sacrifices, &c. all sense of their sin; and therewith depriving them of the fruits of penance, and preventing their humiliation in the sight of God, and the confession of their sin in the face of the church; I say they were not content with all this mischief; without adding another to it, and setting up a conventicle of their factious crew, *out of, and against* the church, when they had got a number of such as themselves together; of persons, I mean, refusing to humble themselves, and submit to penance.

10. After all this, when they had procured a (pretended) bishop to be ordained for them by hereticks; they make a farther venture, and set sail for *Rome*, and carry letters with them, from impious schismatics, to ° the chair of *St. Peter*, to a church of principal account, from whence the unity of the sacerdotal college takes its rise; not considering that these were those *Romans*, whose faith the apostle so much commended; and to whom (therefore) such infamous betrayers of it could never be supposed capable of gaining (a favourable) access. Now, I fain would know what pretence of reason they could have for coming to you, and telling you, they had ordained a rival bishop against me: For either what they have done ^p still pleases them, and they persist in carrying on their wicked practice; or, if they begin to be sorry for it, and would make a retreat; they know the place they should return to. Whereas, therefore, it hath been determined by us all; and it is, moreover, just and fit in the nature of the thing it self, that ^a every one's cause should be heard, where his offence was committed; and each pastor of the christian church,

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

§. 10.
A farther aggravation of the crime of Fortunatus and his adherents, that when they had thus set up a rival bishop, they appealed to a foreign judicatory.

Rom. i. 8.

° *The chair of St. Peter.*] See note [saying unto Peter] in §. 3. of the unity of the church, with what is farther there referred to; as also note [the episcopate is single] in §. 4. of the same tract. Whatsoever here is said of the chair of *St. Peter*, the church of principal account, the faith so much commended by the apostle, and to which perfidy could have no access, which is the literal translation of our author's words; may, all, be fairly accounted for, by an acknowledgement; (1.) That *Rome* was the see of *Peter*. (2.) That *Peter* was considered as the senior fellow (suppose) of the apostolick college. (3.) That *Rome*, in those days, was a church, which was stedfast in the apostolick doctrine, discipline, and worship; and being so, was the more regarded from the seat of empire, which was lodged there; and from those many persons of eminence, which must be supposed, for that reason, to reside there. But more than this, 'tis plain from our author, whom the *Romanists* hence would force into their party, was never allowed to the see of *Rome*, nor to her bishop. Whatsoever compliments he may give to the one, or to the other, 'tis evident all along from his treatment of *Cornelius*, *Lucius*, and *Stephen*, that he held himself their equal in office and character, and in all episcopal prerogatives; altho' the see of *Rome*, was indeed of principal account, was allowed to be the chair of *St. Peter*, was commended by the apostle for the faith of its people; and therefore was not likely to harbour hereticks and schismatics. But to infer hence the privileges which the present church of *Rome* lays claim to, is a great argument, that her claims are miserably in want of better support.

^p *Still pleases them.*] If so; what need was there of resorting to any other jurisdiction, for an approbation of their conduct, when they were sure 'twas right? If it did not please them; the place and persons against whom they had committed their offence, had the first claim to their penitential acknowledgements.

^a *Every one's cause should be heard.*] This whole passage is exceedingly remarkable, and cuts off at once all the present pretences of the *Roman* bishop to an extraordinary paramount jurisdiction; or shews, at least, that our author (whatever compliments he might make to that see in the heat of his rhetoric) meant no submission of his episcopal prerogatives to the chair of *St. Peter*. What he hath here asserted, of local jurisdiction, is perfectly agreeable to the sense of the *Nicene* fathers; who, in can. 5. gave no farther liberty of appeal, from the sentence of a single bishop, than to the provincial council, which was there directed to be held twice in a year. The *Sardican* council (which yet had no authority to repeal the acts of the *Nicene*, as being in all points inferior to it) did indeed determine, that the bishop of *Rome* (in honour of *St. Peter*) should be entitled to a privilege, which before he had no pretence to. But then, if the reader hath curiosity to look any farther into this claim; he will find (upon comparing together the 3^d, 4th and 5th canons of that council) that the bishop of *Rome* derived thence at most, no farther authority, than only of determining, whether the cause should be re-heard by the same judges (*viz.* the bishops of the province) who had before determined it. The cause of appeal was by the 3^d canon of that council, expressly reserved to the cognisance of neighbouring bishops; and, at most, (by the 4th) a deposed bishop, was to have no other substituted in his see (if he made use of the privilege given him in the 3^d) till the bishop of *Rome* had acted, according to the powers therein assigned to him. And in the 5th canon, those powers are more particularly ascertained; which, in the last resort, reached no higher than allowing him to send legates; who, together with the bishops of the province, should hear the cause, and report the determination to him.

A.D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

Mitt. 5. 37.

§. II.
That renegades from the church should not be re-admitted without the consent of the people.

bath a certain portion of Christ's flock assigned to him, which he is to govern in subordination to Christ his master, whom he must account to for his management of his trust; certainly they, over whom we preside, should not run up and down; and wander from their proper pastor; nor endeavour to set the bishops of the church, who live in unity, at variance with each other, by their bold and crafty insinuations; but should plead their cause upon the spot, where they may have their accusers and witnesses face to face; unless, perhaps, these desperate abandoned people will pretend, that the bishops in *Africa* have less authority than elsewhere; because they have already given judgment against them, and have lately condemned them, as guilty of many grievous crimes. Now, therefore, their cause is heard, and sentence passed upon it; and it doth not comport with the gravity of bishops, to incur the censure of levity and inconstancy, when our Lord hath said; *Let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay.* If the number of those be computed who late judges upon their case last year, taking in the presbyters and deacons; there were more persons there present at their condemnation, than there seem now to be joyned with *Fortunatus*. For you ought to be acquainted, my dearest brother, that since he was ordained a (pretended) bishop by these same hereticks; he hath been forsaken, in a manner, by all his company. Indeed they, who had been imposed upon with the sham-pretence, that they all designed to return in a body to the church; when once they saw a rival bishop ordained, perceived presently, that they had been misled; and, accordingly, they are every day returning to us, and knocking at the church doors, to beg admission into it. Yet, considering that we must give an account to God of our conduct in this affair, we do not hastily resolve in it; but distinguish with great care and nicety, who should, or should not, be received into the church: For either the crimes of some are so scandalous, or else the prejudices of our brethren against them are so incurable, that they cannot be received at the hazard of so many souls, as the scandal of admitting them might occasion: Nor may we so cherish sores and ulcers, as to endanger the sound parts by keeping them too near together; nor is he a discreet well advised shepherd, who so mixes the distempered or tainted sheep with the rest of his flock, as to infect them with the contagion of the other's malady.

II. O! that you could be here with us, my dearest brother, when any of these perverse people return to us from their schism; you would see what difficulties I am under, in persuading our brethren to silence their resentments, and consent to the re-admission and reconciliation of these offenders: For tho' they are exceedingly pleased, when such as are less culpable and criminal, return to us; yet when such as seem to them incorrigible and obstinate, such as have been polluted, either with sacrifices, or adulteries, and behave, moreover with a supercilious haughtiness, do so return to the church, that there appears a danger of their corrupting the good manners of those whom they find there; then our brethren murmur, and will hardly bear it. I have much ado to persuade, nay I am forced to extort the consent of my people, that such

^{*} Taking in the presbyters and deacons.] This manner of expression implies some agency which the presbyters and deacons had in the ecclesiastical consistory, tho' not perfectly the same with that of the bishops.

[†] Saw a rival bishop.] This was a proof, that schism was intended; since there could not be two bishops in the same church. The first pretence of the schismatics was only this, that in consideration of their numbers, they should be admitted altogether into the church, by the bishop of it, without being forced to submit to penance: But the ordaining a rival bishop shewed, that there was a design of continuing the schism, and then many fell off from the ringleaders of it.

[‡] Cannot be received.] They who were ejected out of the church, because of the scandal given to it, could not (prudentially) be restored to it, till that scandal was removed; whatever the bishop's authority in this case might be, he could not, in prudence, exert it against such a torrent of prejudice. But see the following note.

[§] To extort.] He was determined, if possible, to have his people's consent, in receiving persons to communion; who were therefore denied it because they had given a publick scandal: So that he did all

such should be restored; and their opposition carries the greater appearance of reason with it, from the case of one or two who have been, perhaps, too easily received by me, when my people were absolutely against it; and who have since grown worse upon it, not keeping the promises they made upon their professions of repentance; because, indeed, they made them hypocritically, and their repentance was counterfeit and unsincere.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

12. It will be needless for me to give you a minute or circumstantial account of those persons, who are now dispatched to you from the (pretended) bishop *Fortunatus*, in company with *Felicissimus*, (who is guilty of almost every crime which can be named) and, who bring with them letters stuffed with stories, as false as the person who writes those letters; as detestable as his life, and as wicked as those persons are who bear them; who, if they were now within the church, would deserve to be ejected from it: Finally, being conscious to themselves of various enormities, they dare not come near to us, nor approach the doors of the church; but have chosen rather to rove about my province, and there * without the church, to impose upon our brethren, and deceive them with specious pretences; and now, when they are found out by all in our parts, and rejected on all hands for their manifold crimes; they have sailed away to you. For they have not the face to appear in these parts, nor dare they trust their cause where they are so well known; inasmuch as the offences wherewith they stand charged by our brethren here, are of the most heinous nature. If they will abide by our judgment here, let them come hither and take the fate of it; or if they would excuse themselves, and make any tolerable defence; let us see whether they have any true penitential sense of their sin, or what fruit they will bring forth, which is worthy of penance: For we † that the church doors against none, who are willing to enter; nor is the bishop here of difficult access; but his forbearance, candor, and temper are well known to all. My heart's desire is, that all who have strayed from the church would return to her; that all our fellow-soldiers would gather themselves together within the camp of Christ, and within the house of God; I would, as to my self, forgive all which is past; many things I wink at, thro' my earnest desire to have all our brethren united; even the faults ‡ committed more immediately against God, I do not rigorously search; nay I even become (my self) an offender, by my too great indulgence to the offences of others; and as for those who are desirous of returning to the church by penance, of confessing their sin with openness and humility, and making all possible satisfaction for it; these I am ever ready to embrace with the most true and cordial affection.

§. 12.
A description
of the frauds
and wicked-
nesses of Fel-
icissimus and
his adherents.

13. But if any imagine that they can procure their return into the church, by menaces rather than intreaties; and that they can force their way more successfully by roughness and obstinacy, than by professions of sorrow, and endeavours to make satisfaction for their sin; they may depend upon it, that the whole church of our Lord will stand up as one man against them; and, that the invincible camp of Christ, under his protection, will never suffer it self to be forced by threats or terrors. A bishop firmly adhering to the gospel of

§. 13.
That a passage
into the church
should rather
be attempted
by intreaties,
than by
threats.

he could to satisfy his people, before he re-admitted such offenders; but yet, when his people would not be satisfied, when they were absolutely against it (*obnixe plebs ex contradiçione, mea tamen facilitate suscepit*) he received them in some instances notwithstanding; and thereby asserted his episcopal authority, whatsoever condescensions he might ordinarily resolve and practise. The question, *In whose hands the administration or execution of this trust was lodged* (*viz.* of reconciling offenders, as a part of the penitential discipline) I have elsewhere considered more at large in my treatise upon that subject, *viz.* ch. 2. part. 2. §. 2.

* *Without the church.* Viz. in a schismatical way.

† *Shut the church doors against none.* Viz. allowed the most grievous sinners to enter; but then it was by the door of penance.

‡ *Committed more immediately against God.* In the class of sins, which required a cure by penance, the sins which offended more particularly against God, such as lapsing, sacrificing, &c. were accounted (it hath been observed already) of the deepest dye, and the most heinous nature.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

2 Chron. 24.
20.

God, and observing the rules which Christ hath set him, may indeed be killed, but he cannot be conquered. *Zacharias*, a priest of God, hath set us a noble pattern of constancy and courage; who, when menaces and stones could not oblige him to desist from his purpose, was slain in the temple, for persevering in the same cry which we now publish against the hereticks of our times, and saying; *Ye have forsaken the ways of the Lord, and he hath also forsaken you.* Nor ought we to be so remiss in our adherence to the rules of the gospel, as to imagine, that the wickedness of a few desperate people, who have forsaken the ways of the Lord, and are therefore (themselves) forsaken by his Holy Spirit, should have more efficacy than the censures of bishops; or that the attempts of such men will prove more powerful in *opposing*, than the providence of God will be in *protecting*. Is the dignity of the catholic church, the ² honour of the people who faithfully adhere to her, and the authority and interest of her bishops, sunk to so low an ebb, that persons *out* of the church shall take upon them to judge of a bishop who is *within* it? That hereticks shall set up themselves as judges of a christian? Distempered and wounded persons, contend with one who is whole and sound? Men who have *fallen*, presume to be competitors with one who hath *stood* his ground? Criminals be set over their judge? And men of a prophane and profligate character, vye precedency with a bishop? What farther remains, if these things be suffer'd, but that the *church* should give way to the *capitol*, that the bishops should quit their station, remove the altar of our Lord; and that the idols and images of the heathen, with all their shrines and altars, be translated into the venerable place where our clergy now sit; and there *Novatian* may have fuller scope for declaiming against us; if, I say, those who have sacrificed, and publickly denied Christ, shall be intreated to come in, and be admitted without any penance, and even domineer and insult us with the menaces of their power? If they are, indeed, desirous of peace with the church; let them lay down their arms: If they would give her satisfaction for their offence; wherefore do they storm and bluster? If they go on to do so, they may be assured, we are not afraid of them; for when antichrist himself shall come, he shall not be suffered to enter the church the sooner for his threats; nor will we yield to his power, because he may give out, that he will murder such as resist him. Hereticks, indeed, whilst they think to affright us with their terrors, do only put arms into our hands wherewith to oppose them; and are so far from demolishing us, that they only sharpen the edge of our courage, when they pretend to grant a delusive *peace*, which is more pernicious than the very *persecution*. We heartily wish that they may be better than their words, and not be so wicked as to *accomplish*, what they are so rash as to *threaten*.

S. 14.
That such as
have stood
their ground
should inter-
cede for the
lapsed as long
as there is any
hope of their
amendment.

14. We beseech the God whom they cease not to provoke, that their hearts may be softened; that they may recover from their desperate frenzy, and return to a right mind; that the light of repentance may shine in upon their souls, which are now over-spread with the thick darkness of their sins; and that they may rather desire the prayers of their bishop, than his blood: But if they persevere in their rashness and folly, in laying their snares, and venting their impious threats against him; there is, I trust, no bishop of God, so mean and abject, nor so obnoxious to human frailties and infirmities, as not to set himself up with firmness and courage against these opposers of God; and he will find, I doubt not, his weakness supported, and his courage animated by the strength of the Lord, and by the power of his might. It is not material to us, who is to take our lives from us, when we are to receive from our master the

* Honour of the people.] Our author's word is *majesty*; which containing an allusion to what was called the *majesty of the Roman people*, in a secular sense, and being so applied by him to the people of the church; would not sound so well in *English*, I thought, as *honour*.

recompence of losing them : But the ^a *concision* of those people is truly deplorable, whom the devil hath so far blinded, that they consider not the everlasting punishments of hell ; and so proceed in their attempts to ^b imitate the coming of antichrist, who is already approaching. Now, tho' I easily believe, my dearest brother, that, agreeably to the rules of our mutual affection, and good correspondence, without my asking it, you ordinarily read my letters to your most renowned clergy, who assist you in your government, as well as to your most flourishing and pious people ; yet suffer me here to beseech and remind you, that what you would otherwise do of your own accord, in honour to me, you now would do at my special request and instance ; that so, if any of the poyson spread by these pestilent people, should have gained access to our brethren with you ; it may be (all) expelled, upon reading my letter ; and that I may have their entire affections, clear of all that mixture, wherewith the detraction and malice of hereticks may have soiled them. But, for the future, let our beloved brethren constantly avoid all correspondence with men, whose words will eat and spread like a canker. For, as the ^{2 Tim. 2. 17.} apostle speaks ; *Evil communications corrupt good manners.* And again he ^{1 Cor. 15. 33.} adviseth ; to reject a man who is an heretick, after the first and second admonition ; knowing that he who is such is perverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. And the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Solomon, thus speaketh ; *An ungodly man ^c carrieth destruction in his mouth, and* ^{Prov. 16. 27.} *hideth fire in his lips.* And again he adviseth, to ^d *hedge in our ears with* ^{Eccles. 28. 28.} *thorns, and not to hearken to a perverse tongue.* And once more he saith ; *A wicked doer giveth heed to the tongue of the wicked, but ^e a righteous* ^{Prov. 17. 4.} *man attendeth not to false lips.* Now, tho' I am persuaded, that our brethren with you, armed as well by your prudent admonitions, as by their own vigilance and caution, will not easily suck in the poyson of hereticks, nor be misled by them, their regard to the authority of God, being equal to their fear of him ; yet my affection to you all, and my concern for your interests, have induced me to add, moreover, my exhortations and persuasives, that ye would have no fellowship nor commerce with men of their character ; that ye would not eat, nor speak with them ; but separate your selves at as great distance from them, as they have separated themselves from the church ; inasmuch as it is written ; *If he shall neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as* ^{Matt. 18. 17.} *an heathen man, and a publican.* And the blessed apostle hath not only advised, but expressly commanded us to withdraw our selves from such men ; *We command you, (saith he) brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^{2 Thess. 3. 6.}* *that ye withdraw your selves from every brother, who walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us.* There can be no fellowship between faith and infidelity ; between the keepers of their trust, and the breakers of it : He who is not with Christ, who is an avowed enemy to Christ, who stands in direct opposition to the peace and unity of his church ; can never agree with us, nor mix with our company. Upon the whole, if they come to us, in an humble way, with prayers and intreaties, and are willing to give satisfaction for their offence, they may then be heard ; but if they pretend to insult and threaten, let them be rejected. My dearest brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LIX.

^a *Concision.*] The word is the apostle's, *Philip. 3. 2.* and means in our author's sense of it, the attempts of those people who were conspiring to divide the church by their schism.

^b *Imitate the coming of antichrist.*] *Viz.* by persecuting the true church.

^c *Carrieth destruction in his mouth.*] The Arabic version is the only one which reads this with our author ; the rest all concurring with our English, and reading it, as we do, *diggeth up evil.*

^d *Hedge in our ears.*] Here our author's reading is the same with the vulgar Latin ; and he constantly adheres to it, when he quotes this passage.

^e *A righteous man attendeth not.*] This is the reading of the LXX ; but our translation is nearer to the present Hebrew text.

D. A. 252.
Epistle LX.



EPISTLE LX.

Written after
his return.

In the month of July, the persecution raged at Rome as well as at Carthage; and pope Cornelius was banished to a place called Centumcellæ; thither our author wrote this congratulatory letter to him upon his gallant confession, and the fortitude of many of his people; especially of such as had lapsed before, and now took the opportunity which was offered them of retrieving their credit, and of behaving with the more spirit and courage from the sense of their former misconduct. This gave an handle of triumph to our author over Novatian, who was against admitting them to the peace of the church; though now they convinced the world how well they had deserved it; and what assistances they derived from it, for confessing the name of Christ, which they had before denied.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cornelius, sendeth greeting.

S. I.



WE have heard, my dearest brother, the glorious character of your faith and constancy; and we received the notice of it with such transports of joy, as if we our selves were partakers with you in your deserved applauses. For since we have one church, one mind, and one common interest; where is the bishop, who takes not as much pleasure in the honours of a brother bishop, as he would take in his own? Or, where are those brethren who do not claim a share in the common joy of their fraternity? Accordingly I cannot express to you the triumph and satisfaction, wherewith we received in these parts the notice of your gallant conduct; of your setting your self at the head of the confession, and leading on your brethren to that gallant enterprize; and of their numbers increasing, thro' the illustrious example set them by such a leader; so that whilst you move on foremost in the tract of glory, you invite many to follow you, and encourage your people to be confessors, by becoming one first your self in the name of them all. Thus we are at a loss which most to commend and celebrate; the alacrity and constancy of your faith, or the harmony and unanimity wherewith your brethren follow so good a precedent. On one hand, the courage of the bishop who set the example, hath been approved by a publick trial of it; on the other, the adherence of his people to him in this exigence, hath been sufficiently displayed by their keeping him company. Whilst you have but one mind, and one tongue amongst you; the whole church of Rome may well be said to have confessed the name of Christ upon this occasion; and that faith which the blessed apostle so extolled, hath been signalized in it. Even then he foresaw, thro' the Spirit, this your gallantry and firmness; and what he commended at that time in your forefathers, is justly applicable to you, their children, and was doubtless designed to provoke you to imitation. Your fortitude and unanimity are great and glorious patterns to the rest of our brethren; whom you have taught thereby to

Rom. I. 8.

[A brother bishop.] This coming from the bishop of Carthage to the bishop of Rome, is as strong an evidence, that he of Carthage held himself equal to him of Rome, as can be desired. Deth any bishop of the Roman communion write th us at present to his Holiness?

have

have high and awful sentiments of God, to abide by Christ with firmness and perseverance in all trials: You have instructed our people to unite themselves closely with their bishop in all difficulties and dangers, and to stand by each other in the seasons of persecution; you have convinced us, that our union may render us invincible, and that the God of peace will refuse nothing to such as pray to him in concert, with peaceable and agreeing hearts. The adversary began the onset, upon Christ's camp, with great rage and violence; but he was repulsed with a courage equal to what he brought with him, and found his storms and terrors encountered with a proportionable measure of bravery and spirit. He fancied he had got ^b another opportunity of advantage over the servants of God, and, that he should find them, like raw undisciplined soldiers, in no degree of readiness or preparation to receive him, and therefore, that he should gain his point, as usual, at the very first attack. He began it with an attempt to single out (like a wolf) one sheep from the rest of the flock; or (like an hawk) to separate some one bird from the rest of the flight; being conscious that he had not strength enough to engage them all together, he chose to attempt them singly, and to pick up what stragglers he could: But he presently found that the army of Christ was on its guard, standing to its arms in an united body; and accordingly he was soon repulsed by their gallant resistance; he found that they knew better how to die than to be conquered; and were therefore invincible, because not afraid of dying; that they ^c might not resist aggressors, it being a thing disagreeable to their innocence and sanctity, to kill even a nocent person; but that they were ready to give up their own hearts blood, and to make their retreat, as soon as might be, out of a world so full of wickedness and barbarity. What a gallant spectacle was this, and how worthy to have God its beholder? What joy must it be to the church of Christ to have had his soldiers advance in his presence to the attack which the enemy made upon them, not in separate companies, or in small bodies; but to have seen his whole camp at once moving forwards to it? For 'tis a fair construction, that all would have engaged if all had heard of it; when every one who did hear of it, pushed on with such alacrity. How many of the lapsed have there recovered from their fall? They maintained their ground upon this occasion with intrepidity, deriving an addition of constancy and courage from their shame and concern for their former miscarriage; from whence it plainly appeared, that they had been surprized before, and disconcerted by the novelty and suddenness of the former adventure; but that they soon recovered themselves, and that the fear of God had given new life to their faith and constancy; so that they waited thenceforwards with patience and resolution;

A. D. 252.
Epistle LX.

^d I say not for the pardon of their former sin, but, for the martyr's crown.

2. What faith *Novatian*, my dearest brother, to all this? Is he yet willing to abandon his error? Or is he the more enraged at the successes of our warfare; as it is not, indeed, unusual for men of his character and complexion to be? And so the more famous we grow, for the constancy of our faith, and the strictness of our union; the more doth his envious and quarrelsome disposition increase upon him? So far is he from an healing temper,

§. 2.
That when the orthodox were persecuted, Novatian was left untouched.

^b Another opportunity.] The first he had was in the former persecution of *Decius*; the other in this of *Gallus*, which so soon succeeded to that of *Decius*.

^c Might not resist aggressors.] It was the undoubted principle and practice of the primitive christians, to receive the injuries and hardships under which their religion put them, without thought of defending themselves by resistance; since their religion stood condemned by the laws of the empire; and so to have resisted the power, would have been to resist the ordinance of God. *Tertullian*, in his apology, shows what mischiefs christians might have done the *Roman* empire, merely by retiring out of it; so great were their numbers, that they would have left it, in a manner desolate; yet they proceeded not so far as this!

^d I say not for the pardon of their sin.] They had now much higher and nobler views, than they would have had in a time of peace; for then they could only have hoped for the pardon of their sin, and a restoration to their church-privileges; but now they had a farther prospect, and might expect not only the pardon of their sin, but the honour and crown of martyrdom.

that

A. D. 252.
Epist. e LX.

that he rather inclines to open his own wound afresh, and to deal out like measure to all about him; proceeding in his virulent aspersions, and perverting the little eloquence he is master of, to the great detriment of all in the reach of it; persisting in those ^e rigorous and stubborn principles which he derived from the philosophy of this world, rather than from the meek and pacifick doctrine of true christian philosophy; like, what he is, a deserter of the church, an enemy to all tenderness, a very ^f murderer of penance, a teacher of pride, a corrupter of the truth, and a destroyer of charity! Doth he yet acknowledge, and distinguish who is the true bishop? Which is the church, and house of Christ? Who are the servants of God, whom the devil so molests? Who are christians indeed, whom antichrist, with all his might, opposes? For the devil troubles not himself with those whom he hath already made sure of, nor does he labour to conquer those who are now in his power: The great enemy of the church overlooks them as his captives, and passes them by without thinking them worth his notice, whom he hath already seduced and alienated from the church; and employs all his pains and stratagems upon those in whom he observes Christ to be dwelling. Altho', indeed, if it should so fall out, that one of that wretched company ^g should be seized; he could have no reason to flatter himself with any hopes upon his confession of Christ; since 'tis an agreed rule, that whoever suffers *without* the church, is so far from being entitled to the crown of faith, that he continues obnoxious to the punishment of having forsaken it; nor can he dwell in the house of God with such as are of one mind, who hath here departed from that house, where peace and concord dwell, merely to follow his own contentious humour. For my own part, my dearest brother, since it hath pleased God, in his gracious providence, ^h to advertise me of our approaching trial; I cease not to use my best endeavours in exhorting my people to prepare for it, and to join with me, as our mutual concern for each other's welfare obliges us, in continual watchfulness, fasting, and prayer. Wherefore let us cry unto God continually, and deprecate his wrath; for this is our heavenly armour, which will enable us to stand our ground with constancy and courage. These are our spiritual preservatives, from which we hope for our protection and security. Let us agree in remembering each other at this time of peril and distress, and, by recommending ⁱ both here and there our common interests to the throne of grace, let us endeavour to procure an alleviation of our several burdens; and which soever of us shall first be favoured by our Lord, with a removal hence; ^k let our affection still

be

^e *Rigorous and stubborn principles.*] Alluding to the stoicks, whose stubbornness and rigour, Novatian seemed rather to follow, than to copy after the meek and gentle doctrine of Christ.

^f *Murderer of penance.*] *Viz.* as discouraging all from entering upon it, by taking away the fruits of it. For who, was it likely, would submit to it, when there was no hope of absolution?

^g *Should be seized.*] *Viz.* brought before the magistrate, under the name and character of a christian; this, if he should confess, our author hath often asserted, would be of no use to him *without* the church; since 'twas the gospel which made martyrs; and the sin of schism was so great, that it forfeited the privilege of the gospel.

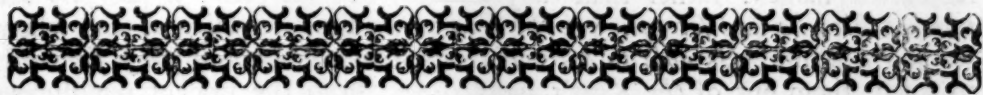
^h *To advertise me.*] See note [*vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure*] in epist. 7.

ⁱ *Both here and there.*] Here at Carthage, and there at Rome.

^k *Let our affection.*] It is somewhat doubtful, whether our author meant this of the person first removed, or of the person staying behind. It hath either way an innocent sense; tho' Rigaltius, thinks it would have been needless and impertinent in our author, to have advised the continuance of a glorified person's affection to his brethren, whom he left behind; as taking it for granted, that no one could be fit for glory, who should not retain such affection for them. Our most learned editor is therefore of opinion, that 'twas meant of the person surviving; that he should continue instant in prayer for both their people, as well the Roman, as the Carthaginian, whether the Roman or Carthaginian bishop should first be called off. I see, for my own part, no harm in allowing, that our author's concern might here exert it self officiously; in exhorting, that that might be done, which would have been done, whether he had exhorted it or no. For the exhortation is mutual, and directed to himself, as well as to Cornelius, in case himself should first be called off. The words, I think, are more favourable to this construction, than to that which refers them to the survivor; *Quis istinc nostrum prior divina dignationis celeritate praecessoris; perseveret apud dominum nostra dilectio.* Where the words *apud dominum* seem to suppose the person

be expressed for our brethren, in never ceasing prayers unto the Father for them. A. D. 252.
My dearest brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you. Epistle LX.

person with our Lord; and there is no imaginable harm in allowing the saints departed to have some concern for those whom they left behind; since this can be no foundation of addressing to them. See note [no remembrance of him at the holy eucharist] in epist. 2. with what is farther there referred to.



EPISTLE LXI.

Epistle LXI.

Upon the 14th day of September, Cornelius died in the place of his banishment; and on the 25th of the same month, our most learned annalist telleth us, that Lucius was ordained his successor. In October, the same persecution made an attempt upon him, which had banished his predecessor; and our author, upon hearing of his confession and ordination, sent him, in form, a letter of communion from himself and his colleagues, which is lost. Lucius, mean while was banished, as were diverse with him, who, all, returned from their banishment towards the latter end of November; since it is plain, from our author's letter, that they returned in the same persecution of Gallus, and not after it, as Pamelius would insinuate; though by what means they so soon got their liberty is not known, but only referred, in general, to the providence of God. Our author, as soon as he heard of their return, sent them this letter to congratulate them upon it, in his own, and the name of such colleagues as happened to be then with him.

Written after his return, in the pontificate of pope Lucius.

CYPRIAN, with his colleagues, to his brother Lucius, sendeth greeting.



WE lately congratulated you, dearest brother, upon the felicity of your administration; when the favourable providence of God vouchsafed to you the double honour of a confessor, and a bishop; and now we again repeat our gratulations to you, and to your worthy companions, and to all your brethren, upon your happy return with undiminished honours, thro' the same favourable protection; that now your flock hath its pastor restored to it, that^b your ship hath again its master at the helm of it, and that your people have their governour once more at the head of them: Thus your banishment was so providentially ordered, that it deprived not the church of her bishop; but took him from her for a short season, to return him to her with^c the greater increase of honour. The three noble youths (whose history we have transmitted to us in the book of *Daniel*) were not the less entitled to the honour of martyrdom, because they came safe out of the fiery furnace, and did not suffer the death which was there designed for them; nor was *Daniel's* glory diminished, because, when he was thrown into

Dan. 3.

^a Companions.] Viz. Those who attended him in his banishment.

^b Your ship.] The church is often compared to it, particularly in the constitutions, b. 2. c. 57. &c.

^c The greater increase of honour.] Viz. by having shewn himself willing and prepared to suffer for Christ. This passage confirms what was observed in the introduction to this epistle, that Lucius returned in the persecution of Gallus, who had banished him.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LXL.
Dan. 6.

Dan. 3. 15,
y. 18.
y. 17.

the den of lions, and intended for a prey to them, he survived the mischief which had been hatched against him; and which, thro' our Lord's miraculous protection of him, turned in the conclusion to his immortal honour. When the martyrdom of confessors is at any time postponed; it doth not detract from the merit of their confession, but only shews forth the goodness and power of divine providence. We have seen, in your case, the same part repeated which those three noble youths asserted before the King; they truly were ready to suffer in the flames, rather than they would *serve his gods, or worship the image which he had set up*; yet *the God whom they worshipped*, and whom we also worship, was *able to deliver them from the burning fiery furnace*; to rescue them out of *the King's hands*, and from the present punishment wherewith they were threatened. All this, I say, we have seen in your case repeated, the same fortitude in your confession, and the same deliverance wrought for you by the providence of God: For thus, when you were ready to suffer all kinds of punishment; our Lord interposed to rescue you from it, and to preserve you for the future advantages of his church. Wherefore, ^d by your return, the honour your bishop had gained in his confession, was no way contracted, but his episcopal authority thence was magnified; since now you have a priest to stand before the altar of God, who not only by word and precept can exhort his people to confess the name of Christ, and suffer martyrdom for it; but by his own practice and example, encourages them to undergo it; who now, upon the approaches of antichrist, trains up his soldiers to the battel against him; not so much by persuasives and exhortations, as by setting them a pattern in his own gallantry and conduct. Wee see plainly, dearest brother, into the reasons and ends of divine providence under this dispensation, and thence do clearly comprehend the views and purposes whereupon this persecution is so suddenly broke out upon you; and why it came to pass that the secular powers fell upon the church of Christ, and the blessed martyr, and bishop *Cornelius*, with such rage and violence; *viz.* that our Lord might hence put hereticks to the route, and to confusion; and clearly point out the ^e *one* true church, and that one bishop, who was chosen according to his will; as well as distinguish, what presbyters were ^f joined with this one true bishop in his sacerdotal honour; which was the ^g true people of Christ, united to each other in the bonds of mutual charity; in short, who were most the objects of the enemy's displeasure, and ^h who were most spared by the devil, as his favourites and followers. For the grand adversary of Christ, makes his attacks upon none but the camp, and the soldiers of Christ; he thinks it not worth his while to meddle with *hereticks*; whom he accounts himself sure of, as having already *fallen* by their heresy. Whereas it is his chief business to beat down those whom he finds *standing*. It was our hearty wish, dear brother, that we might have been present with you at your return from banishment, and have taken our share with the rest of our brethren, in the common joy for such an happy event. What a transport must it needs have been to all your people? What mutual embraces must have passed between you, as you severally met each other? We easily imagine the difficulty you found to satisfy

^d By your return.] *Viz.* By your returning so soon; for they were prepared to have endured a longer time of banishment, if the good providence of God had not sooner released them. He addresses himself here to the companions of *Lucius* in his banishment.

^e One true church, and that one bishop.] In each episcopal district there was but one mother church, and but one bishop of it: But this is no otherwise said of the *Roman*, than it might have been of any other church; and it would have been as much schismatical, to have set up any opposite church or bishop, in any other episcopal district, as in that.

^f Joined with this one true bishop in his sacerdotal honour.] Presbyters, therefore, had a certain proportion of the episcopal dignity conferred upon them, the particulars of which we learn from the practice of the church; but ordination we never find among the functions of a presbyter.

^g The true people.] A bishop, clergy, and people, thus united, constituted a church.

^h Who were most spared.] *Novatian* was not hurt in this persecution; tho' his great pretence against the church, was her being too easy to such as lapsed in these trials.

their

their looks and longings, their careffes and falutations. From the joy they felt upon your arrival amongst them; they may now a little guefs at the joy they will feel upon the coming of Chrift; of whose approaches, which are ⁱ now fo near, they have already feen a refemblance, in your return. And thus, as *John* was formerly his forerunner, and preached to the people, that Chrift was at hand; fo now the return of a bifhop, a confessor, and prieft of Chrift, proclaims his *return* too. Mean while, dear brother, I and my colleagues, with all our people, fend you this letter, to exprefs our joy to you in our stead, and to testify the part we take in all your interefts; never ceafing in our ^k prayers and facrifices; to give thanks, on your behalf, to God the Father, and to his Son, Chrift our Lord; nor to befcech him, who ^l himfelf is *perfected*, and who *perfects* all who are fo; that he would prefcrve to you, and *perfect* the glorious crown of your confeffion; who perhaps, for this very purpofe, hath recalled you from your banifhment, left your glory fhould be obfcure and hid, if it fhould happen, that your confeffion fhould be *perfected* by martyrdom far from home. For the victim, which is defigned as a pattern to the brethren, fhould be ^m offered up in their prefence. We heartily with your welfare, deareft brother, and fo take our leave of you.

A. D. 252.
Epiftle LXII.

ⁱ *Now fo near.*] It hath been obferved already, as a common error of the *Ante-nicene* fathers, that they thought the day of judgment much nearer than it really was; and this hath been accounted for. *Rigaltius* faith, that Chrift's coming here, meant his coming, as the awarder of the feveral prizes and crowns to fuch as fhould fuffer martyrdom in this perfecution.

^k *Prayers and facrifices.*] The facrifices were the euchariftical oblations, which always bore a part in the folemn worfhip of chriftians.

^l *Himfelf is perfected.*] Chrift is faid to have been *made perfect through fufferings*. Hebr. 2. 10. and by one offering to have perfected them who are fainted. Hebr. 10. 14.

^m *Offered up in their prefence.*] This (faith *Rigaltius*) was our author's practice as well as his advice; and in his 8th epiftle, he hath faid the fame in his own cafe; telling his clergy and people, that a bifhop fhould fuffer in the city whereof he is bifhop, that his people might have the advantage of his dying example.



EPISTLE

A. D. 253.
Epistle LXII.

EPISTLE LXII.

Written after
his return.

About the beginning of the year 253 (saith our learned annalist) St. Cyprian wrote an answer to those Numidian bishops, who had sent to him for the assistance of his church, towards redeeming diverse of their brethren, who had been taken captive by some of their Barbarian neighbours, and borderers. That which so long rendered the date of this letter uncertain, was a notion, that the enemies who had taken these African christians captive, must have been either Persians, Goths, or Scythians. But how, in the name of truth and probability, should the Persians, Goths, or Scythians, extend their excursions into Africa? Whereas from what Augustin saith in his 80th epistle, 'tis evident that there were diverse barbarous nations bordering upon the confines of the Roman dominions in Africa; and these, during the negligent administration of Gallus, made frequent excursions upon their neighbours in the Roman territory, and carried off many captives; on whose behalf the bishops, in those parts, had written to our author, for contributions to assist in redeeming them; and received from him this letter in answer to their request.

CYPRIAN to his brethren Januarius, Maximus, Proculus, Victor, Modianus, Nemefianus, Nampulus, and Honoratus, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



Read over, my dearest brethren, the letter which you sent me, concerning the captivity of our brothers and sisters, with a compassion and concern equal to what you wrote it with; for who can withhold his tears from flowing out upon such dreadful calamities? Or who would not consider the misfortune of his brethren, as, in some measure, his own? Especially when he shall reflect upon what the apostle St. Paul hath said upon this subject; *Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member rejoice, all the members rejoice with it.* And again; *Who is weak, and I am not weak?* We therefore should look upon the captivity of our brethren as a state of bondage to our selves; since we are all incorporated together as one body; and not only the motives of humanity, but those of our holy religion, ought to excite and quicken our endeavours for redeeming our brethren from their slavery: For the apostle St. Paul having in another place put the question; *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* If the rules of charity did not oblige us to assist our brethren in such an extremity, yet we ought to consider here, that they are the temples of God, which thus are taken captive; that therefore we should not, by our neglect and indolence, suffer them to continue long under their confinement; but should rather labour with all our industry and application, to gain the favour of Christ our judge, Lord and God, by our good offices towards them. The same apostle St. Paul hath told us, that, *as many of us as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* Wherefore we should behold Christ in the persons of our captive brethren, and redeem him from his slavery, who

redeemeth

redeemeth us from the death to which we were obnoxious; that he who hath taken us out of the jaws of the devil, and dwelleth and abideth in us, may (* himself) be taken out of the hands of the *Barbarians*; and that he, who redeemed us by his cross and passion, may (himself) be redeemed with our money; who, perhaps, hath permitted this misfortune to befall our brethren, that he thence might try the power of our faith, and whether we will do in the case of others, what we should desire to have done for our selves, if we were captives in the hands of these barbarians. For who, with any sense about him, of humanity and mutual benevolence, would not, if he be a father, imagine those his children, who are there in slavery? Or, if he be an husband, would not entertain those sentiments of tenderness and concern for the honour of his marriage-bed, which he could not but entertain, if his own wife were there?

A. D. 253.
Epistle LXII.

2. But how great and just must our fears and our sorrows be, for such virgins as have fallen into the hands of these barbarians? For whose *liberty* our concern is not so great, as for their *modesty*; nor are we so apprehensive of their *bondage*, as we are of the *stews* and *brothels*, to which they may be exposed; lest those bodies which have been dedicated to the service of Christ, and ^b devoted in intent and purpose to perpetual continence, should be defiled by the lust and petulance of their insulting masters.

§. 2.

The great danger of the virgins they made captives.

3. These several circumstances being taken into our serious and compassionate consideration, we have all agreed, with great cheerfulness and unanimity, to send in our contributions to the assistance of our brethren. This is a work of God, to which, at all times, our religion prompts us; but now more especially upon such a moving occasion as this, we find our selves excited to serve them with greater vigour and affection: For our Lord having said in his gospel; *I was sick and ye visited me*; how much more, must we conceive, will it turn to our account, when he shall add, upon this occasion, in our favour; *I was in prison, and ye redeemed me*? And whereas he saith; *I was in prison, and ye came unto me*; how much more advantageous must it be to us, when he shall begin to say, "I lay in prison, and was a slave to *Barbarians*; I was immured and cast into fetters by them; but you delivered me from this bondage, you rescued me out of this prison, expecting your recompence at the day of judgment." We are therefore, upon the whole, very thankful to you, for admitting us to share with you in your concern, and to take our parts in so good a work; for offering and opening to us such a fruitful field, into which we might cast our seed, with an assured hope of a plentiful harvest, and of receiving thence an ample recompence, as the fruit of this useful labour. Accordingly we have sent you ^c an hundred thousand sesterces, which we have collected from the contributions of the clergy and people belonging to the church over which we preside; which you, according to your wonted diligence in cases of this nature, will take care to distribute in a proper manner. We heartily wish, that no such occasion may happen for the future, and that our brethren may be protected by the favourable providence of our Lord, in a state of security from all such dangers: But yet, if for the trial of our faith and charity, any such accident should again befall them, I beseech you make no difficulty of acquainting us therewith immedi-

§. 3.

Our author, with his brethren, contributes largely to their relief.

Matt. 25. 36.

* *Himself*.] Viz. in his members, the members of his church.

^b *Devoted*.] See notes [*virgins*, and *devoted themselves*] in §. 3. of the *habits of virgins*.

^c *An hundred thousand sesterces*.] By the nearest and best calculation we can make; this would amount in our money to 781 l. 5 s. (saith bishop Fell) and a great sum it was, to be collected in those days, when money bore another guise value than it doth now; and shews that the number of christians must have been very great in *Carthage*; since they were not the richest of the people; who generally were too much afraid of their estates to come into a persecuted religion. See note [*thousands of rich daily given*] in epistle 20. §. 1. This sum, we are to observe, was collected from his own church only; over and above the several sums contributed from such bishops as happened to be at *Carthage*, when this case was laid before our author. How the church-revenues were managed, and divided, see note [*poor of the church*] in §. 4. of the *case of the lapsed*.

A. D. 252.
Epistle LXII.

§. 4.
He subjoins
the names of
the contribu-
tors, that
there might
be a special re-
membrance of
them in the
offices of devo-
tion.

ately; and be assured, that, tho' our church and brethren here do heartily pray you may have no occasion for their assistance; yet if you should at any time hereafter stand in need of it, they will most willingly give it to the best of their abilities.

4. And, that you might remember our brothers and sisters, who have contributed to this necessary work, in your devotions; and return their good offices, by giving them^d a place in your prayers and sacrifices; I have subjoined the names of each of them; and I have added, moreover, the names of those of our colleagues and fellow-bishops who happened to be here; and who, for themselves and their people, have contributed according to their respective abilities: I have likewise set down, in a distinct account, the several sums by them contributed, over and above what was here collected in our church; all whom, I hope, you will remember in your prayers, as the rules of charity, and of our holy religion direct you. My dearest brethren, I most heartily, and always, wish your welfare, and so take my leave of you.

^d A place in your prayers and sacrifices.] Concerning the recital of the names of the brethren in the most solemn offices of worship; see note [observe the days] in §. 2. of epistle 12.



Epist. LXIII.

EPISTLE LXIII.

Written after
his return.

Was probably written about this time by our author; diverse passages in it evincing, that it was written in a time of persecution. The occasion was, a practice then obtaining among some bishops of his province, administering water only, instead of wine and water together, in the holy eucharist. The pretence for it was a custom, which it seems had prevailed for some time in some places, not for doing this constantly, as the Aquarian hereticks did, but only, in times of persecution, when the smell of wine might betray christians; and in their early morning sacrifices, when (as the apostle observed, Acts 2. 15.) the use of wine was not common. This was the subject whereupon our author wrote to Cæcilius; whether the same with him of Balta, mentioned in suffr. 1. coun. Carthag. or any other bishop, cannot at this distance, and with such a want of light, be determined.

CYPRIAN to his brother Cæcilius, sendeth greeting.

§. 1.



HOUGH I am very sensible, my dearest brother, that most of our bishops, who by the grace of God are set over the several churches of the world, do adhere exactly to the rules of the gospel, and depart not in any thing from those precepts and practices which they have received from Christ, ^a by following any novelties of

^a By following any novelties of human invention.] The novelties of human invention, here censured, were such as implied a departure from Christ's institution; such as using water instead of wine, (for mixed with wine our author plainly used it) or such, as the present church of Rome hath now introduced, by taking the wine wholly from the laity. Every additional ceremony to Christ's institution was not judged a departure from it; for then the use of milk and honey, which *Tertullian* mentions at baptism,

of human invention; yet, inasmuch as some particular persons amongst them, in consecrating the cup, and in ^b administering it to the people, through ignorance or inadvertence, do not follow the pattern set them by Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, the author and institutor of this sacrifice; I thought it incumbent on me to write you this letter; that so, if there be any, who still continue this erroneous practice, they may be convinced of their mistake, and return to the original usage which hath been handed down to his church from Christ its founder. I hope you will not think, my dearest brother, that herewith I send you my own, or any other man's fancies; or that I take upon me^c to intermeddle, in this case, without necessity; since you know 'tis my way to be very tender in such matters, and that I love not to dictate, nor to be assuming; but when any thing comes recommended by the direct authority of our common master, a faithful servant stands bound to obedience; and thence should be acquitted of all forwardness and presumption, for intermeddling in a case which his Lord commands him, and which the fear of offending obliges him to interpose in. You are, therefore, to understand, that I have ^d received an admonition, to have the rule, which our Lord hath given, observed in the oblation of the eucharistical cup, and to have the example of his practice in it exactly followed; so I mean, as that the cup which is offered up in commemoration of him, may have ^e a mixture of wine in it, when it is so offered: For whereas Christ hath said, *I am the true vine*; it can never be thought, that the blood of Christ is water, but wine; nor will his blood, by which we are redeemed and quickened, appear to be in the cup, when there is no wine in it to represent his blood, which the scriptures have so generally taught us, was spilt and poured out for us.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIII.

John 15. 1.

2. A type of this, and of our Saviour's passion, we read in the book of *Genesis*, concerning *Noah*; who is said to have drunk wine, and to have been drunken; to have been uncovered within his tents, and to have laid down naked; to have had notice taken of such his nakedness, by his middle son, and the fact published, whilst his elder and younger son covered it, with other particulars not needful at this time to be farther dwelt upon; since this is enough to our present purpose; that *Noah*, ^f being herein a type of what

§. 2.
The scriptures of the old testament cited.
Genes. 9. 21, 22, 23.

tism, would have been a departure from Christ's rule of baptism, which yet no one judged it; nor were the baptismal answers, interrogatories, and renunciations, censured as deviations from Christ's appointment, tho' it was confessed that they were additions to, and enlargements of, it. See *Tertull. de Coron. Mil. c. 3.* who mentions these and diverse other usages with approbation, which yet he considers no otherwise than as human inventions. Of these (saith he) tradition is the author, custom the confirmer, and faith the observer. See note [a mixture of wine] in §. 2. of this epistle.

^b Administering it to the people.] The people, therefore, most plainly then received the cup.
^c To intermeddle in this case.] Every bishop was to transact for his own diocese, in matters of external order and discipline, and thereof was to give an account to God: Yet in the case of any one's departing from the rules of the gospel, each bishop had his interest in, and concern for, the whole flock of Christ; and was to warn that flock of the danger they were in from such a pastor, and to notify to them his incapacity for the charge, if he did not reform. Now besides this general care, incumbent on each bishop; our author, perhaps, had a nearer interest in this affair, as bishop of the metropolitical church of all Africa.

^d Received an admonition.] He seems to hint at some vision he had been directed by, upon this occasion; of which, in the rest of his works, we have diverse examples.

^e A mixture of wine.] Our author's main point was, that there should be wine in the cup; he was for indulging, otherwise, the received custom of mixing it with water, which perhaps took its rise from a compliance with the *Aquarians*; and prevailed, very generally, in the *Cyprianic* age; and with it an opinion seems also to have taken root, that our Lord himself used wine mixed with water in the institution it self; since the wine at meals was usually so mixed in hot countries; and if so; our author literally herein kept to the institution. See note [his cup should consist of wine mingled with water] in §. 3. of this epistle.

^f Being herein a type.] This may seem forced to a reader, who is unacquainted with the mystical way of interpreting scripture, which prevailed in the first ages of the church; and was so far allowed of, as to conclude against the persons 'twas addressed to. And indeed (as bishop *Fell* hath already very appositely observed) St. *Peter* himself having made *Noah's* ark allusive to Christ's church; and the deluge, from which eight persons were saved, a figure of baptism; (1 *Per. 2. 21.*) the first writers might thence the more easily be tempted to represent the practice of the same person, a type or figure of the other sacrament. See note [finishing a word, &c.] in §. 3. of the 2^d book of testimonies, and note [as it is written] in the 3^d book of the same, §. 1. See also this particular allusion illustrated farther in §. 4. of this epistle.

hath

A. D. 253.
EPIST. LXIII.

hath since come to pass, drank not water, but wine, and thereby exhibited to us a figure of our Saviour's passion. Thus we may also observe, the mystery of our Lord's sacrifice prefigured to us, in the conduct of the priest Melchisedec; as the holy scriptures have represented it, saying; that Melchisedec, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, and he was priest of the most high God, and he blessed Abraham. Now that Melchisedec was a type of Christ, the Holy Ghost hath declared in the book of Psalms; where he saith to the Son, as in the person of the Father; ^a *I begat thee before the morning star, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* The order then, which thence is handed down to us, was plainly this; that Melchisedec was a priest of the most high God, that he offered up bread and wine, and blessed Abraham. And who, I pray, is more properly and truly a priest of the most high God, than our Lord Jesus Christ? Who offered up a sacrifice to his Father, the very same which this Melchisedec had offered before him, *i. e.* bread and wine, which were his own body and blood. The preceding benediction to Abraham hath an aspect upon, and a reference to, our people likewise. For if Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness; certainly then, whoever believes God, and lives by faith, will be found righteous too; and it plainly appears from the example of faithful Abraham, who was so blessed and justified, that every one will be so who follows it; as the apostle St. Paul hath asserted, saying; *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Ye know, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* Now the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith, preached before to Abraham, that in him all nations should be blessed. So then they which be of faith; are blessed with faithful Abraham. From whence we find in the gospel; that children should be raised out of the stones, that is, out of the Gentiles, unto Abraham. Thus when our Lord commended Zaccheus, he said unto him; *This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.* Wherefore, that the blessing upon Abraham, by the priest Melchisedec, which we read in the book of Genesis, might be duly conveyed, and pass in form to him; there went before it a type of the sacrifice of Christ, which consisted of bread and wine, and to which that action of our Lord did perfectly correspond, when he made an oblation of bread and of the cup which he had mixed with wine; and when he, who is fulness it self, fulfilled the figure by completing it in his own practice. The Holy Ghost hath likewise prefigured to us, by the mouth of Solomon, the sacrifice of our Lord, mentioning the victim slain, the bread and wine, the altar, and even the apostles themselves; *Wisdom (saith he) hath built her house, she hath founded it upon seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine in her cup, she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her servants, she hath called with a loud voice to her cup, and said; Whoso is simple, let him turn in*

Prov. 9. 1, 2,
3, 4, 5.

^a Brought forth bread and wine. Mercet and Gratian say, that 'twas very probable, this was after some sacrifice preceding it.

^b I begat thee. This Psalm is cited by our Lord, and interpreted of himself, in Matt. 22. 44. and the Jews themselves have acknowledged it; particularly Moses Haddarshan in Gen. 37. 12. Midras Tabbolim in Ps. 2. R. Saad. Gaon. in Dan. 7. 13. Talm. Tract. Berachoth. c. 5. Bp. Fell.

^c Which were his own. This having been a controverted point, I give the words of our author literally translated: But what our author here saith, relates most certainly to our Saviour's institution of the eucharistical sacrifice; and not to his oblation of the sacrifice upon the cross; otherwise the passage is nothing to our author's purpose: I would rather, therefore, translate these words, if I had liberty, thus; which were the representatives of his own body and blood.

^d Mixed with wine. Our author (we see) takes it for granted, that our Saviour instituted wine and water.

^e Apostles themselves. These he understands as referred to in the mention of servants. Bp. Fell. ^f Seven pillars. This number was mystical, and was often used to denote the church, as in §. 20. of the first book of testimonies, our author more at large insists.

^g To her cup. See this reading noted in §. 2. of the 2^d book of testimonies.

hither to me; and as for them who want understanding, she hath said; *Come eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled for you:* ^{A. D. 253. Epist. LXIII.} Where, when he declares the wine to be mixed; he prophetically alludes to the cup of our Lord, which hath a mixture of wine and water in it; and thus in our Lord's passion, the event corresponds exactly with the prediction. The same thing is moreover pointed to in the blessing of *Juda*, which carries with it a figure and type of Christ, *viz.* that his brethren were to *praise him, and bow down before him*; ^{Gen. 49. 8, 9.} that he was to have his hands upon the neck of his enemies, who should fly before him; those very hands, wherewith he bore the cross, and overcame death; that he was to be the *lion of the tribe of Juda*, and was to *couch, and rise up* (*viz.* at his death and resurrection) and was to be the hope of the *Gentiles*; to all which the holy scripture hath added, that he was to *wash his garments in wine, and his cloaths in the blood of grapes*: Where, when the blood of grapes is mentioned, what else should we understand by it, but the wine in the eucharistical cup? Thus, likewise, in the prophet *Isaiah*, the Holy Ghost hath prefigured our Lord's passion; *Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him who treadeth in the wine fat?* ^{Isai. 63. 2.} Can water, think you, make any one's garments red? Or is it water, which is trodden in the wine fat, and squeezed out of the press? Wine is therefore mentioned, that we might be sure to understand it of Christ's blood; and that it might appear the prophets had foretold, what was afterwards fulfilled in the cup of our Lord. The wine-fat, and the pressing it, are likewise there mentioned; because, as there would be no possibility of coming at wine, except the bunches of grapes were first pressed and trodden; so neither could we drink the blood of Christ, unless Christ had first been pressed and trodden on; and had drank in his own person of that cup, wherein they who should believe in him, were afterwards to pledge him.

3. And, indeed, wherever *water alone* is mentioned, in the holy scriptures, there is some allusion, or other, intended to baptism by it; as we find particularly in a passage of the prophet *Isaiah*, where he saith; *Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old; Behold I will do a new thing, which shall immediately spring forth, and ye shall know it; I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in a dry place; to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people whom I have purchased for my self, to shew forth my praise.* ^{Isai. 43. 18, 19, 20, 21.} In which passage God by his prophet foretold; that waters should flow in abundance among those nations which before were dry, and should water the chosen people of God; that is, those who, by the regeneration of baptism, should become his children. It was again foretold to the *Jews*, that if they were athirst for Christ, and would seek him, they should find that thirst quenched among our people; *i. e.* indeed should have the grace of baptism bestowed upon them. ^{John 7. 37, 38.} *If they shall be athirst* (saith the same holy prophet) *he will lead them through the deserts, he will cause the waters to flow out of the rock for them; the rock shall be cleft, and the waters shall gush out, and my people shall drink thereof.* And this we find fulfilled in the gospel, when Christ, to whom this rock alluded, was pierced with a lance in his crucifixion; and in his life time he seems to have referred to this prediction of the prophet, when he cried, saying; *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as*

* Gen. 49. 8, 9, 10.] That the blessing of *Juda* had an allusion beyond the person of *Juda*, to some other then not known, the *Jews* do still confess, though they care not to apply it now to Christ; but before his times, the construction was certainly referred to him, and he was the confessed *Shiloh*, of v. 10.

P Remember, &c.] This passage we have interpreted, by our author, after the same manner, in the first book of testimonies, §. 12. Bp. Fell.

† If they shall be athirst.] Our English version followeth the *Hebrew*, and hath the countenance of the *Chaldean* paraphrast, and the oriental versions, as well as of the vulgar *Latin*; but our author (according to his usual manner) literally followeth the *LXX*.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIII.
Ibid. §. 39.

Matt. 5. 6.

Matt. 26. 27,
28, 29.

1 Cor. 11. 23,
24, 25, 26.

the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow living waters. And, to put it past all dispute, that our Lord spake not there of the cup, in the holy eucharist, but of christian baptism, the same evangelist hath added; that *he spake this of the Spirit, which they who believe on him should receive.* For by baptism the Holy Ghost is received; and thence they who are baptized, and have obtained the Holy Ghost, arrive at length to the privilege of drinking the cup of the Lord. Nor should it move a scruple in any one, that when the holy scripture speaks of baptism, it mentions our being athirst, and drinking; since our Lord in the gospel hath pronounced his blessing upon such as *hunger and thirst after righteousness*; in which his meaning is only to express the greater appetite and ardor wherewith they drink, who are very thirsty; just as he elsewhere speaks to the Samaritan woman, saying; *Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him, shall never thirst.* In which he manifestly alludes to the saving waters of his baptism, which is once administered, and then never repeated; whereas the cup of the Lord is what we always thirst after, and often drink of in his church. Nor need I, dear brother, insist upon many arguments to prove, that baptism is always signified by water, and that we ought so to understand it; when our Lord himself hath most plainly distinguished between his baptism and his cup, by directing; that the true water, the water of life eternal, should be administered to believers in his baptism, and, by the most engaging example of his own practice, that his cup should consist of wine mingled with water: For taking the cup on the day before his passion, he blessed, and gave it to his disciples, saying, *Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins. I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until that day, when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.* Now here we find, that the cup whereof our Lord made his oblation, was mixed, and that the wine of it was that which he called his blood. From whence 'tis apparent, that the blood of Christ is not offered, if the cup hath no wine in it; and that we do not offer up the sacrifice which our Lord commanded, in a proper manner, unless our oblation and sacrifice correspond with his practice in their first institution. How then shall we drink this wine new with Christ in the kingdom of his Father, if in this sacrifice we do not offer the wine which God and Christ have required, and if we do not mix the cup of our Lord according to our Lord's appointment? The blessed apostle, likewise, who was specially chosen to preach the truths of the gospel, hath given us, in his epistle, much the same account of this great transaction, saying; *The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body which shall be given for you, this do in remem-*

[Of drinking the cup.] Hence it is most evident, that the cup in our author's time was denied to none who were baptized, and had not forfeited their privilege.

[His cup should consist of wine mingled with water.] See note [by following any novelties, &c.] in §. 1. and note [a mixture of wine] in §. 2. of this epistle. Here our author speaks his opinion clearly, that our Lord instituted the receiving of his cup with wine and water. So *Justin Martyr* in *Apol. 2. Clem. Alexandr. b. 2. Pedag. c. 2.* and the practice of the Roman church is to mix wine with water, and then to pause a little before the consecration, that the water may incorporate with the wine. The *Rabbis* agreed it to be a thing indifferent, whether the cup of their *Passacium*, were mixed or not. Their rule was the common wine of their meals; which, as was before observed, usually had a mixture of water in it. And in the *Greek church* the water is added after the consecration. Upon the whole; *Aquinas* and *Bonaventure* seem to conclude right in this matter; that such a mixture is not essential to the sacrament, but may be omitted, or used discretionally. Bp. Fell.

[Shall be shed.] So some MSS. read it in the future; which would conclude, that it was not literally his blood which was then poured out; since that was afterwards to be done.

[His oblation, was mixed.] This was an argument *ad hominem*; for the *Aquarians*, and these people who thus far symbolized with them, did not doubt but that there was water in the cup; of which our author himself was also persuaded; and then this passage clearly proves, that there was wine too.

[Shall be given.] See note [shall be shed] in this §.

brance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped; This cup is the new testament, in my blood; this do as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me: For as often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye will shew the Lord's death till he come. If then it be prescribed by Christ, and handed down to us by his apostle with approbation; that as oft as we shall thus drink in remembrance of our Lord, we should do the same thing which our Lord hath done before us; it will be found, that we do not observe the commandment, as we should do, unless we do exactly what our Lord hath done, and mix the cup of our Lord as he did, and so conform in all points to his direction and example. Now that we should in all points thus conform, and that the disciples should observe and do, what their master before them hath directed and done; the same apostle elsewhere hath more strongly asserted, saying; I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel; which is not another, unless there be some who trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach otherwise unto you, than as we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again; if any man preach any otherwise unto you, than as ye have received, let him be accursed. Wherefore, since neither an apostle, nor an angel from heaven, is at liberty to preach any other doctrine, than what Christ hath once taught, and his apostles preached; I cannot but wonder how it comes to pass, that in some places, against the rules of the gospel, and the instructions of the apostles, water should be offered in the cup of our Lord, which cannot alone represent the blood of Christ with any propriety.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIII.

Gal. i. 6, 7,
8, 9.

4. A type of this we have mentioned by the Holy Ghost in the book of *Psalms*, where the cup of our Lord is alluded to, in the following words; Thy cup exhilarates, and is very good; now the cup which so exhilarates, must certainly have wine in it; since water can with no propriety be said to have any such effect. The cup of our Lord is said to exhilarate in the same sense wherein wine is represented as having such an effect upon Noah in the book of *Genesis*: But inasmuch as this effect which the cup and the blood of Christ have upon us, is not the same which common wine hath; therefore when the Holy Ghost, in the book of *Psalms*, had said of this cup, that it exhilarated; he presently subjoyned and added, that it was very good; since the cup of Christ doth so exhilarate, as at the same time to make us serious and sober-minded, to infuse into us the true wisdom from above, to rectify our sense and taste, and to lead us by proper steps to the knowledge of God; and, as by a seasonable use of our common wine, our minds are lightened, and our cares relaxed, and all our sorrows silenced; so by drinking the blood of our Lord, from his cup of salvation, we lose our remembrance of the old man, we bid adieu to our former (worldly) conversation; and our hearts, which before were sad and heavy with the burden of our sins upon them, become light and easy with the assurance of their pardon. And yet, after all, this cup can no otherwise render us truly light and easy, than as we drink of it within the church of Christ, and hold fast his truth. But now how perverse and preposterous is it in us, to use water instead of wine, when our Lord at the marriage feast is known to have turned water into wine? Which should surely hint to us, that in the sacrifices we offer to our Lord, we should chuse to celebrate them with wine. It is observable of the Jews, that when the grace of God had left them, their wine too failed them: For

§. 4.
The use of
wine in the
holy sacra-
ment illustra-
ted by types
and figures,
deduced from
the old testa-
ment.
Psal. 23. 5.
Gen. 9. 21.

John 2. 9.

* Thy cup exhilarates, and is very good. Calix inebrians is taken from the LXX's *μεθύσκων*, which the oriental versions, as well as the vulgar Latin, generally agree with; though the Hebrew only saith of this cup, that it run over, or was liberally filled; and so saith the Chaldei paraphrase; but the vulgar Latin, the Hebrew and Chaldei paraphrase read it my cup.

D. A. 253.
Epist. LXIII.
Isai. 5. 7.

the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts was the house of Israel: And, accordingly, when our Lord was to teach us, that the *Gentiles* should succeed them; and that we, through faith, should find that acceptance which they had forfeited; he turned water into wine, thereby, in a figure, signifying, that upon the desertion of the *Jews*, the *Gentiles* should flow in, and should meet together at the marriage of Christ with his church.

§. 5.
That the people are signified by the water.
Revel. 17. 15.

5. Holy scripture hath plainly intimated in the book of *Revelations*, that waters signify a multitude of people, saying; *The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.* And we may observe the same in the mystery of our Lord's cup; for because Christ bore us and our sins; we see his people figuratively represented in the water there; and his blood in the wine. When, therefore, water is mixed with wine in the sacramental cup, his people are there united with him; and the multitude of believers are then most intimately joined with the object of their faith: Which conjunction of wine and water in the cup is so made, that there can be no separation afterwards of the one from the other. Nor can the church, or the people thereunto belonging, so long as she or they shall persevere in their faith, ever be separated from Christ; or disunited from their love of, and adherence to, him. Wherefore, in consecrating the cup of our Lord, neither water alone, nor wine alone should be offered to him: If *wine alone* be offered, there is indeed the blood of Christ, but then we are not with it; or if *water alone*; the people then will be without Christ; but by the mixture of *both together*, the sacrament is completed. Thus the cup of our Lord should neither consist of wine nor of water only, without a mixture of both together; even as the body of our Lord consists not of meal and flower, or of water only; but of both so mixed together, as to make a loaf of bread. Under which type our people are represented as united to each other; and, as many grains of corn united and ground, and mixed together, make one loaf; so, in Christ, who is the bread of heaven, there is one body, with which we are all united.

John 6. 50.

§. 6.
That custom, when destitute of the authority of scripture, should not be followed.

John 15. 14, 15.

6. Wherefore, if any heretofore have been of opinion, that water only should be offered in the cup of our Lord, there is no reason to follow such a custom; but the question should rather be, what precedents they have to vouch for them? For if in the sacrifice which Christ first offered, none but Christ should be followed; we then should do what Christ himself hath done, and what he directed others to do after him; seeing he hath said in his gospel; *If ye do whatsoever I command you, henceforth I call you not servants,*

[His people figuratively represented.] Bertram, who wrote about the middle of the 16th century, hath argued from these words against transubstantiation, and for the necessity of understanding the body of Christ to be in the eucharist, after a spiritual manner; since not only the body of Christ, but of his people too, was contained in the sacramental bread; and in the cup, the wine was no otherwise his blood, than the water was his people. Bp. Fell.

[Nor wine alone.] i. e. So long as this custom should continue in the church. For there is no strict arguing from allegories and figures, allowable; the *trine* immersion in baptism was used to denote the *trinity*; and the *single* immersion as fitly represents the *unity* of the Godhead. Immersion alluded to our burial with Christ; and *aspersion* refers to our being purified by the sprinkling of his blood. Formerly communicants all partook of one larger loaf, to signify their strict union with each other: Now the same sacrament is administered in diverse pieces, representing the pieces of silver which were the purchase of his person from the traitor Judas. Our author in this very epistle saith, that our Lord instituted this sacrament at night, to shew, that the world was drawing towards its evening; but (saith he) we celebrate it in the morning, in remembrance of his resurrection. So that, when a custom had once obtained; people might allegorize as they pleased, upon the first design of it; but those allegorical reasonings, carried no consequence with them, obliging to the continuance of such a custom. Bp. Fell. See our author farther allegorizing upon the sacramental bread and wine; the one consisting of so many grains of corn; the other of the juice of so many grapes united to each other, in §. 2. of ep. 69.

[The body of our Lord.] Our author means here the sacramental bread.
[None but Christ should be followed.] None but he, most certainly, in the form and matter of his sacraments, which are essential to them; though in circumstances of less account, such as time, place, and gesture; our author's great master, Tertullian, was for giving large allowances to the customs and traditions of the church. See note [by following any novelties, &c.] in §. 1. of this epistle.

but friends. And that Christ only should be regarded, the Father himself hath borne testimony by a voice from heaven, saying; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* So then, if we would hear Christ, and him only; we should not mind what this or that particular person before us hath happened to think fit, or proper to be done; but what Christ, who is all in all, and above all to be considered, hath given us the pattern of in his own practice. For the *truth of God*, and not the *custom of man*, is best entitled to our imitation; which God hath fairly intimated by his prophet *Isaiah*, where he saith; *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* And our Lord in his gospel repeats the observation, saying; *Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.* And again he asserts, that *Whoever should break one of the least of these commandments, and teach men so, he should be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.* Now if it be unlawful to break one of the least of our Lords commandments; how much more must it be so, to infringe an institution of this vast importance; which hath so near a relation to the death of Christ, and to the redemption purchased by it; or indeed to make any change in it, under the pretence of human tradition; or to warp it from the rule which was originally appointed by God for the observation of it? For if Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, be (himself) the great High-priest of God the Father; and accordingly first offered his own person as a sacrifice to his Father, and afterwards directed us to do the like in commemoration of him; then that priest doth most properly represent his master in this action, who keeps most closely to the pattern which Christ hath set him; he then offers up to God the Father in his church, the truest and compleatest sacrifice, if he celebrates it in the manner wherein he is assured that Christ himself did celebrate it. But there will soon be an end of all rule and order in religious matters, if the directions which we receive from God, concerning them, do not meet with a punctual and exact observance.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIII.
Matt. 17. 5.

Isai. 29. 13.

Mark 7. 9.

Matt. 5. 19.

But perhaps some will be apprehensive of this consequence from their morning-sacrifices, that the smell of wine, may betray their receiving the blood of Christ. And thus our brethren learn to be afraid of suffering with, and for, Christ, in times of persecution; whilst they seem ashamed of owning his blood in their eucharistical oblations. Whereas our Lord hath said in his gospel; *Whoever shall be ashamed of me, of him will the Son of man be ashamed.* And the apostle hath moreover said of himself; *If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* How, indeed, shall we ever be able to shed our own blood for the sake of Christ, who are thus ashamed of drinking his? Others, perhaps, may flatter themselves with this consideration; that though they offer up water only in the morning; yet at even, and at supper-time they use the cup mixed: But now at supper-time we cannot call the whole body of our people together, nor have them witnesses of our celebrating this sacrament as our Lord appointed it. Well! But say some, our

Y. 7.
The first objection obviated, that by drinking wine in the morning they might betray themselves to the heathens; as also to the 2d, that the eucharist was instituted in the evening, and should not therefore be celebrated in the morning.
Mark 8. 38.
Galat. 1. 10.

[In vain do they worship me.] This is a literal translation from the LXX. quoted by our Lord from them, and not from the Hebrew. Mark 7. 7. Our English translation, [their fear of me is taught by the precept of men] is taken with more exactness from the Hebrew; but our Lord quoted from the LXX. [Morning sacrifices.] Tertullian had called them *antelucan assemblies*, or assemblies before day-light, which were designed for avoiding notice; and then they celebrated the eucharist, which otherwise, 'tis likely, they might have celebrated in evenings; and some times did, tho' not in so full a body. [Smell of wine.] Because it was not otherwise usual to drink wine so early. [Water only in the morning.] Hence 'tis clear, that this practice bordered not upon the *Aquarian* heresy, which held wine to be execrable; but only had regard to times of danger and persecution. [At even, and at supper-time.] Hence, also, 'tis evident, that the eucharist was administered at supper, and at meals, as Tertullian hath expressly asserted in c. 3. *de Coron. Mil.* and this custom *Socrates* tells us, b. 4. c. 22. continued a great while among the churches of Egypt. Bp. Fell. [Cannot call the whole body of our people together.] Because it was dangerous so to do; and therefore these communions must have been little more than acts of family-worship, and did not manifest the adherence of the main body of the people to Christ's institution.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIII.

Exod. 12. 6.

Psal. 141. 2.

1 Cor. 11. 26.

§. 8.
That we should
not be directed
by the exam-
ples of men,
but by the pre-
cepts of Christ.

Psal. 50. 16,
17, 18,

Jer. 23. 28,
30, 32.

Jer. 4. 9, 10.

John 8. 12.

Lord did not offer the cup thus mixed in the morning, but in the evening, and after supper; and should we not therefore celebrate our Lord's institution after supper too; and will it not be sufficient, if *then* we offer the cup mixed, as he offered it? To which I reply, that it behoved Christ to offer it towards the close of the evening; that the hour in which he offered this sacrifice, might remind us of the world's approaches towards it's evening; as we find it written in the book of *Exodus*; *All the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening*: And again in the *Psalms*; *Let the lifting up of my hands be an evening-sacrifice*. But now we celebrate our sacrifice in the morning, in honour of our Lord's resurrection: And because in all our sacrifices we mention the passion of our Lord (for the passion of our Lord is indeed the main of our sacrifice) we should exactly follow the pattern he set us in it; since the scripture saith expressly, that *as often as we shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, we shall shew the Lord's death till he come*. Wherefore, as often as we offer the cup in commemoration of our Lord's sufferings; let us, by all means, do what we know him to have done before us.

8. And now, dear brother, if any of our predecessors, with honesty of heart, but ignorance of understanding, should appear to have neglected this observance, and not to have followed the pattern which Christ hath set them; our Lord, in his mercy, may pardon such ignorance; but we can have no reason to expect the same indulgence, who are now reminded by our Lord to offer his cup with a mixture of wine in it, as he (himself) hath offered it before us. And we should write, I think, to our colleagues, upon this subject; that so the rule of the gospel may every where be observed, without the least departure from Christ's example and instruction: Which to despise or neglect any longer, what were it, but to incur the reproof and censure of our Lord, which we read in the book of *Psalms*, saying; *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth; seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee? When thou sawest a thief, then thou didst consent with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers*. For to declare the statutes and covenant of our Lord, and not to do as our Lord hath done, what is it, but to cast his words behind us, to hate instruction, to be guilty. I say not of carnal but, of spiritual adultery and theft; I mean by corrupting and adulterating the commandments of God, and by stealing out of the truths of the gospel, what our Lord there did and spake? Even as we find it written by the prophet *Jeremiah*; *What is the chaff to the wheat? Therefore behold I am against the prophets; saith the Lord, who steal my word, every one, from his neighbour, and cause my people to err by their lies*. And again in another place; *She committed adultery with stones and with stocks, and yet for all this she turned not unto me*. This adultery and this theft we ought to guard against with all our industry and caution; that the guilt of neither may at any time be imputed to us. If we are, indeed, the priests of God and of Christ; I cannot, for my life, find out whom we should rather chuse to follow than God and Christ; especially since he hath said in his gospel, *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*. Wherefore, that we may not walk in darkness, we

ⁱ Offer it towards the close of the evening.] See note [nor wine alone] in §. 2. of this epistle.

^k The passion of our Lord.] i. e. The commemoration of Christ's sufferings, is the main design of the christian sacrifice.

^l Any of our predecessors.] The practice of some bishops who had sat in our author's see before him, was pleaded for this practice.

^m Now reminded by our Lord.] Viz. by the application of his word, here all along explained; or perhaps our author might here design recurring to his old resort of visions.

ⁿ What our Lord there did, and spake.] Our Lord celebrated with wine and water; these people would have stolen the wine out of the cup, and so have filched away some of the gospel truths recommended by our Lord's words and actions.

ought to follow Christ, and to keep his commandments; who, when he was sending forth his apostles, said elsewhere; *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, ° dipping them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* If then we would walk in the light of Christ, we should not in any instance depart from his precepts; but should be thankful to him for instructing us in our future conduct, whilst he remits to us our past miscarriages, arising from ignorance and error. And now, as his^p second coming draws near, he vouchsafes to enlighten our hearts yet more and more, with^q the illuminations of his heavenly truth. Upon the whole, therefore, my dearest brother, it is most agreeable to our reverence for Christ's institutions, and to the place and office we hold in his church, to abide by the rule which he hath set us, to mix wine and water in his cup when we offer it; and to reform, upon proper admonition, the error into which some of late have fallen; that so, when he shall come in his glorious majesty, he may find us abiding by what he hath directed, observing what he hath taught, and practising what he practised. My dearest brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

A. D. 253.
Epiſt. LXIII.
Matt. 28. 18,
19, 20.

[^o Dipping them.] *Tingentes.* But some MSS. read it *Baptizantes.* The practice, however, in these hot countries, was ordinarily dipping; except in the case of clinical baptisms; the reason of which, will, in a fair construction, extend to infants in these cold climates. See note [person sprinkled] in *disſertat. coun. Carth.*

[^p Second coming draws near.] He had said in §. 7. that the hour in which our Lord first celebrated this sacrifice, was designed to remind us of the world's approaches towards its evening. This opinion of the fathers, that the world was near its dissolution, hath already been noted.

[^q The illuminations of his heavenly truth.] *Viz.* either by particular vouchsafements, which our author often mentions; or else by the standing means of instruction in the word of God.



EPISTLE

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIV.

EPISTLE LXIV.

Written after
his return, in
the pontificate
of pope Ste-
phen.

Upon the 5th day of March, Lucius, the Roman pontiff, suffered martyrdom; and upon the 13th of the same, Stephen succeeded him; about which time the persecution abated, by Emilian's assuming the imperial purple, and giving the emperor Gallus a diversion from troubling the Church; who, with his colleague Volusian, was soon after slain by his soldiers, when they found themselves inferior in strength to Emilian's army; so that they reigned not two compleat years. Emilian was soon dispossessed by Valerian, whom Gallus had appointed his general on the other side of the Alps; and Valerian was acknowledged Emperor, with an universal consent, about the month of June, who soon restored peace to the church; so that about the month of September, 66 bishops assembled in council at Carthage, to settle the affairs of the church, after the persecution (for no more particular reason is assigned for it) and whilst they were sitting, letters came to them from one Fidus (it should seem, a bishop) complaining of Therapius (a bishop) who had too suddenly granted the peace of the church to one Victor, a presbyter; and also concerning the baptism of new-born infants, whether they should be baptized before the 8th day from their birth, which it was his own opinion they should not be. The answer to these two particulars, is the subject of our present epistle.

CYPRIAN and the rest of his colleagues, who are sitting with him in council (in number 66,) to their brother^a Fidus, send greeting.

S. I.

WE have perused your letter, dearest brother, wherein you intimate to us the case of Victor, once a presbyter, whom our colleague, Therapius, unseasonably and rashly admitted to communion, before he had gone through a regular course of penance, or endeavoured to appease the wrath of God (whom he had so grievously offended) by proper acts of humiliation. The news of this did not a little trouble us, to find the authority of our late determinations, upon this affair, so contemptuously neglected; and the peace of the church so hastily

^a In number 66.] This very strongly intimates, that the church had now peaceable times; or else so many bishops could never have met with impunity or safety.

^b Fidus.] Of what see this Fidus was bishop, doth not appear; but 'tis probable his see bordered upon that of Therapius, who is said in the council of Carthage (suffr. 61.) to have been bishop of Bulla, a city in Africa, Zeugisana; and who appears to have been present at this council, from the reprimand which he received in it.

^c Once a presbyter.] He lost, by his lapse, his sacerdotal dignity, and was withal awarded to a state of penance. Upon receiving absolution from his bishop, he was restored to communion, but recovered not the privileges of his office; so that the 25th of the apostolick canons, which directs "clergymen to be deposed, and not segregated; because a man should not suffer twice for the same offence;" was either not generally received; or else its signification must be restrained to the particular crimes which are specified in the said canon. And the latter opinion is the more probable; because we find a case in the 29th and 30th canons of the same collection, wherein deposition and excommunication were, both, awarded; and the 32^d supposes it no uncommon case for presbyters and deacons to be segregated by their bishop.

granted, before the expiration of the term, wherein it was resolved, that penitents should labour to atone for their foul offence; and this without any^d intercession or knowledge of the people; without any^e plea of sickness, or other necessity to apologize for the practice. After a thorough debate and discussion of this case, we resolved to content our selves with reprimanding our colleague *Therapius*, for his unadvised conduct, and with admonishing him to forbear such attempts for the future; but yet we were of opinion, that the peace of the church given in any manner by a bishop of it, was not to be taken away; and therefore we suffered *Victor* to continue in possession of the privilege which had thus irregularly been granted to him.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIV.

2. Now, as to the case of new born infants, who should not, according to your opinion, be baptized within the second or third day after their births; but should rather wait the time appointed by the Law for Jewish circumcision, and so not receive the sanctification of baptism till the 8th day; I must tell you, that we were^f all, here assembled in council, of another mind; and no one of us came into your sentiments; but, on the contrary, we all concluded, that the grace and mercies of God were to be denied to none, who should come into the world. For since our Lord hath said in his gospel; *The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them*; as far as in us lies, we should certainly use our endeavours, that no soul be lost: For what, I beseech you, can be imagined wanting to an human creature formed in the womb by the hands of God? Children, after they are born, seem indeed to us to receive an increase of growth and stature, as each day, by which in this world we compute the succession of time, advances; but^g in the account of God, whatsoever is made by him, is immediately perfected by his glorious power. And that the gifts of God are equally dispensed to all, whether infants or adults, the holy scriptures have fairly hinted to us in that passage, where *Elisha* is represented, as laying himself upon the infant child of the *Shunamite* widow, then dead in the house; putting his mouth upon its mouth, his face upon its face, and stretching each limb of his own upon each limb of that; which if you interpret literally, considering the different dimensions of an infant's body from a grown person's, it were impossible for them so to suit and tally together; or, that the less limbs of the one should be co-extended with the larger members of the other. But indeed there is in this representation a mystical and hidden meaning; and the equality, which there is between all men, when God hath once created them, is herein alluded to; and so, though according to the estimate of this world, an advance of years upon us may produce a growth of our bodily stature; yet this is a difference which enters not into the account of God; except you could imagine, that the grace which is conferred upon baptized persons, is dispensed in different proportions, according to the difference of age in its several recipients; whereas, in truth,

§. 2.
The baptism of new born infants here confirmed and established.

Luke 9. 56.

2 Kings 4. 34.

^d Intercession or knowledge of the people.] The people usually interceded for the penitent; or if the bishop had a mind to restore him, he commonly consulted them upon it, to whom the scandal had been given. But yet the authoritative part was his; and our author, tho' he condemned the indiscretion of *Therapius*, was not, we see, for rescinding his act.

^e Plea of sickness, or other necessity.] This refers to two relaxations, made in two preceding synods; the first allowed of clinical absolutions in case of danger; the 2^d allowed the same, upon the view of an approaching persecution, and the necessity of the times.

^f All here assembled in council of another mind.] The unanimity wherewith this question was carried, shews that infant-baptism was at this time no novel usage; there was no manner of dispute, whether infants should be baptized; but whether before the 8th day or not. To which the unanimous resolution was, that the grace of God should be denied to none. And even *Tertullian* himself, who was against the ordinary administration of this sacrament to infants, pronounced him guilty of murder who should refuse it to any in cases of necessity. He held, that baptism was so necessary to all; that even lay-men should administer it, when a priest could not be had, rather than any one should die without it; whilst yet, in ordinary cases, he was for reserving the privilege of administering it to the bishop. *Tertull. de baptis. c. 17.* See also what is noted in §. 6. of the case of the lapsed; note [soon after their birth.]

^g In the account of God.] Who measures not, as we do, the succession of time by the little narrow spans of hours, days, and years; but grasps, within one comprehensive view, the whole circle of eternity.

PART II.

B b b

the

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIV.

Galat. 2. 6.

Tit. 1. 15.

§. 3.
The superstitious custom of refraining from the kiss of a new born infant noted.

§. 4.
No body to be restrained from baptism.

Acts 10. 28.

the Holy Ghost is given to all in equal measures, through the divine indulgence and benignity, without any regard to their bulk or growth: For as *God accepteth no man's person*, so neither doth he respect the age of any one; since he approves himself equally the Father of all, and opens^h to all alike the attainment of his heavenly grace. As to what you object ofⁱ an infant's uncleanness, during the first days after it's birth, and that none of us care to kiss it within such a period; we cannot agree with you, that this should be any hindrance to it from receiving the grace of heaven; since we find it written, that *to the pure all things are pure*.

3. Nor ought any of us, at last, to be squeamish, with regard to a creature which God hath vouchsafed to make. For though an infant, in this case, comes fresh from the birth; yet still we should not be^k nice in kissing it, or giving it the usual token of peace, when it is baptized; but should rather consider, as our religion would direct us upon such an occasion, that the hands of God are but just taken from it; which, therefore, in a fair construction, we may be understood to kiss, when we embrace what was so lately made by them. In the Jewish circumcision of the flesh, the 8th day was, indeed, observed; but then that was but a type and figure of somewhat to come after it, which is now compleated and finished by the coming of Christ: For because it was the 8th day (*i. e.* indeed the first after the Jewish sabbath) wherein our Lord was to rise from the dead and quicken us, and appoint for us a *spiritual* circumcision; this same 8th day, or first after the sabbath, thus signified by our Lord's resurrection, was heretofore appointed as a type; which ceases in course when its antitype appears, and when the spiritual circumcision is given us to supply its room.

4. Upon the whole, therefore, we think, that no one is now, by any law, restrained from the grace of baptism; and particularly, that the *carnal* should not be suffered to hinder the *spiritual* circumcision; but that every person should, by all means, be admitted to the grace of Christ; especially since St. Peter hath said in the *Acts* of the apostles; that *God had shewed him, he should not call any man common or unclean*. If any thing could hinder an human creature from^l the attainment of grace; one would think it should rather be the guilt of those more heinous sins, which adult and grown persons are most apt and likely to commit. But now if^m remission of sins be granted to theseⁿ most heinous offenders, who have long ago sinned against God; and if none of them be denied access to the grace of baptism; how much less reason is there for denying it to infants; who, being but newly born, can be guilty of no sin, except that, by being derived from *Adam*, according to the flesh, ^o their birth hath communicated to them the infection and pu-

^h To all alike.] Our author, therefore, had certainly no notion of any distinguished favourites, registered from all eternity in the book of God's secret will, without any regard to their respective actions.

ⁱ An infant's uncleanness.] *Musebium*, b. 2. c. 16. mentions *Nundinum* as a Roman goddess, who derived her name from the *ninth* day, which was called the day of purification; wherein new born children were *dedicated*, and cleansed from the impurities of their birth, and received a name. So that eight days were to be accomplished, before the child was accounted pure. This superstition, therefore, seems to have took its rise from a mixture of *Musebium*, Jewish, and *Heathen* fancies. *Tertullian* hath argued this point at large with *heaven*. Bp. *Fall*.

^k Nice in kissing it, or giving it the usual tokens of peace.] If it had been agreed, that it was improper to kiss children till the 8th or 9th day; *thus*, in our author's time, would have implied, that they could not be baptized: Because the kiss of peace attended baptism, as an acknowledgement, that the person baptized was received into the fellowship of the faithful.

^l The attainment of grace.] Observe how it was taken for granted, that baptism did put the person receiving it into a state of regeneration, of acceptance and favour with God.

^m Remission of sins: be granted.] This was not disputed; it was agreed on all hands, that baptism was a cure for all preceding guilt.

ⁿ Most heinous offenders.] First, and chiefly, such as had apostatized, or lapsed; next murderers, adulterers, &c.

^o Their birth.] No passage of the antients is stronger than this, for the doctrine of original sin. See note [who is there] in §. 54. of the 3^d book of testimonies.

nishment of his offence; who, therefore, are the more easily admitted to the pardon of their sin, because it is not so properly their *own*, as *another's*: Wherefore we came in council, dear brother, to this resolution; that no one should be denied, by us, access to the grace of God; who is kind, and merciful, and indulgent to all of us. And as our rule hereupon is general, so we think the equity of it more particularly extends to new born infants; which, therefore, we would have observed with an especial regard to them, who by their tears and deprecations, ^P as soon as they are born, seem to implore our help in the most moving manner, and, to have the best title, of any, to the mercies of God. We heartily wish your welfare, dearest brother, and so take leave of you.

A. D. 253.
Epist. LXIV.

^P *As soon as they are born.*] The heathen writers generally interpreted the tears and cries of new born children, as omens of the miseries which they were to encounter in the course of life. Our author, like a christian, gives another turn to them, and would represent them as imploring the *grace of God*, thro' the *agency of man*, in baptism. Bp. Fell.



EPISTLE LXV.

Epistle LXV.

Fortunatianus, (*who had been bishop of^a Assuri, a city, or town of Africa* *Zeugitana*) among diverse other clergy who had lapsed in the late persecution, was attempting to recover his former office and station in the church, directly contrary to the determination of the whole episcopal college; which had unanimously agreed, that such clergy should rise no higher, after full penance, than lay-communion. Upon which, St. Cyprian dispatched away their letter to Epictetus (*who should seem to have been substituted in the room of Fortunatianus*) and to the people of that place, warning them of this dangerous attempt from their quondam bishop, who had added to his other misbehaviour, the guilt of joining with Novatian in his schism.

Written after
his return.

CYPRIAN to his brother Epictetus, and to the people of Assuri,
sendeth greeting.



Was exceedingly concerned, my dearest brethren, to find that *Fortunatianus*, who was once your bishop, after so foul a lapse as he had been guilty of, should pretend to resume his episcopal office, and to act amongst you as if he had never been disqualified; which attempt of his affected me the more upon his own account, whose unhappiness it was to be so far either blinded by a mist of Satan's raising, or misled through the persuasions of wicked men, as to claim an interest in that office which he had so shamefully betrayed; when he ought rather to have spent his time in penitential sorrow, and in labouring to appease the wrath of God, whom he had so grievously offended: For, surely, 'tis impos-

§. 1.

^a Assuri.] See *conc. Carth. supr.* 68. where *Vistor* is named as bishop of that see; who, therefore, in all likelihood, was dead by this time; and *Fortunatianus* had succeeded him, and been deposed for his misbehaviour.

A. D. 253.
Epistle LXV. fible for any man to think that he can be fit to wait at the altar of God, who hath once attended the devil's; or indeed, that he should not inflame the account of his guilt; who, when he could not approve himself a leader to our brethren, in the gallant offices of faith, and of christian fortitude, taught them the very reverse of all those duties, and set them an example of treachery, baseness, and presumption; who, instead of preparing them to stand the encounter with firmness and courage, instructed them only not to ask pardon, after they had given ground, and been vanquished. Whereas our Lord hath complained of such people, saying; *Even to them have ye poured a drink offering, and offered a meat offering; should I not be angry at these things?* And elsewhere hath denounced against them; *He that sacrificeth unto any God, save unto the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.* And again he hath said; *They worship the work of their own hands, that which their fingers have made: And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself; therefore I will not forgive them.* Once more we read in the book of Revelations, the menaces of our Lord, threatening and saying; *If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand; the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed together in the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb: And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever: And they shall have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image.* Wherefore, since our Lord hath threatned, that in the day of judgment he will thus torment and punish those who obey the devil, and sacrifice to idols; how can he think to act as a priest of the true God, who hath obeyed and served the priests of the devil? Or how can he imagine it fit for him to put his hand to the sacrifice of the true God, and to the solemn service of christian worship, who hath already engaged it in the service of heathen altars? Especially when he knows, at the same time, that God hath forbidden the priests to approach his sacrifice, tho' they had none but the lighter sort of stains upon them; and accordingly may read him in the book of Leviticus, saying; *Whoever hath any spot or blemish on him, let him not approach to offer oblations to God:* As likewise in the book of Exodus; *Let the priests who come near the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord forsake them:* And again in the same book; *When they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place, they shall not bring sin upon them lest they die.* They, therefore, who bring such heavy sins along with them, as those of sacrificing to idols, do but offer to God a prophane oblation, when they sacrifice to him; nor can they be ever entitled to a share in his priesthood, or duly perform their office of interceding for their brethren before him, when we find it expressly asserted in the gospel; *That God heareth not a sinner; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth;* although, some men's hearts may be so blinded and darkened, that they will admit no light from the holy scriptures; but having once mistaken their way, they will proceed in their error, and run on in darkness still farther and farther: Nor should it indeed surprize us to find, that they who

^b Be angry.] The Hebrew and the Syriac read it, *take comfort*, as we translate it; but the LXX and the Arabic version are with our author.

^c Oblations.] Bread, saith the Hebrew; but some other of the Eastern versions, read it *oblations*, as well as the LXX, from whom our author took it.

^d Forsake.] Derelinqunt, is our author's word; the LXX read it *amandant*, change them, which is much to the same purpose with forsaking them. The Hebrew, and other Eastern versions, read it *desistat*, break in upon, &c. all intimating some heavy punishment to them.

^e Interceding for their brethren.] Observe our author asserting here the mediatorial office of the priest, as he had done before in §. 15. of the case of the lapsed; where the reader may see what is noted upon the words, *that I may beseech God for you.*

have once denied their Lord, should afterwards deny his precepts, and our admonitions, which are founded on them.

A. D. 253.
Epistle LXV.

2. Filthy lucre, and a share in the oblations of the faithful, is what such men as these hanker after, of which they were heretofore so insatiably greedy; and still they long for the regale of fine entertainments, wherewith they loaded themselves at every opportunity, and felt each day the effects of the surfeit they had got upon the day preceding; and now they plainly shew, that the interest of religion was never at their hearts; but sordid gain, and sensual pleasure. From all which considerations we are perfectly persuaded, that it is the will of God they should undergo the censure past upon them, and no longer wait at the altar; *i. e.* indeed, that *profane* persons should no longer have to do with *holy* things, nor earthly minded persons with heavenly things; that the betrayers of their faith should no longer be entrusted with its *deposita*; nor the impure and filthy, with the chaste and venerable mysteries of religion.

§. 2.

That wicked men desire a part in the ministry for the sake of gain.

3. Wherefore, that such men may never again have it in their power to profane the altar, and to corrupt our brethren; we should labour with all our might to prevent their return, and to repress their insolent attempts; that they may never more have a part in the sacerdotal function, who have been such near borderers upon the brink of utter ruin; and have fallen, ^{as} with a greater weight, so, much lower than the common lapses of our lay-brethren have sunk them. But if they shall persist in their incurable enmity to the church; and if the Spirit of God shall so far abandon them, that the darkness, under which they lie at present, shall continue to cover them; it will then be most advisable for us to withdraw our brethren from their pernicious company, lest they likewise fall into the error which hath so fatally misled the others; since, ^{where} the Holy Ghost is not, the oblation cannot be consecrated; nor will our Lord hearken, with favour, to the intercessions of any man on the behalf of others, who (himself) hath personally affronted our Lord. If, therefore, Fortunatianus shall persist, in his mad endeavours, to impose upon our brethren, either thro' a forgetfulness of his heinous offence, which the devil hath prevailed upon him to overlook, or else thro' a professed attachment to the service of Satan; it should be your endeavour to countermine him, to clear up the mists which he hath raised, and to prevent the effects of them upon your brethren; that they may not be found consenting to, nor partaking of, other men's sins and follies; but may adhere inviolably to the known methods of salvation, and the rules of duty, without departing from them in the least particular. And as to the lapsed; they should, by all means, persevere in their humiliations before God, and in a penitential acknowledgement of their grievous sin; not forsaking the church (which, according to our Lord's appointment, was to be but one) but, instead of it, continuing in their mournful supplications, and knocking with earnestness at the door of the church, that so they may be received into their former station, and may return to

§. 3.

That it is the part of good men to be watchful against the attempts of wicked men, and not to partake with their rashness and folly.

^f Filthy lucre.] The clergy, 'tis evident, had then an honourable maintenance; and St. Paul hath told us, that the Lord had ordained it for them. But yet their regard to this maintenance might then, as now it may, be overstretched; tho' there could be no harm in expecting a subsistence; if it were not sought in the first place, to the detriment and disparagement of higher views. See note [tithes of our possessions] in §. 20. of the unity of the church.

^g As with a greater weight, so much lower.] Viz. From a greater height: He means, that their sin had the more aggravations, as their duty obliged them to greater measures of constancy and courage, than lay-men were obliged to. The sin of clergymen acting out of character, is the more heinous, because they should be examples to others; and are supposed to have stronger convictions, more knowledge of their duty, and an higher sense of it, than lay-men generally can be expected to have.

^h Where the Holy Ghost is not.] This reasoning is pretty much a-kin to the whole stream of suffrages in the council of Carthage; whete the absence of the Spirit from schismatical acts, was conceived to imply their nullity; or was considered (however) as a reason to the church for not acknowledging their validity.

ⁱ Intercessions.] See note [interceding for their brethren] in the former §.

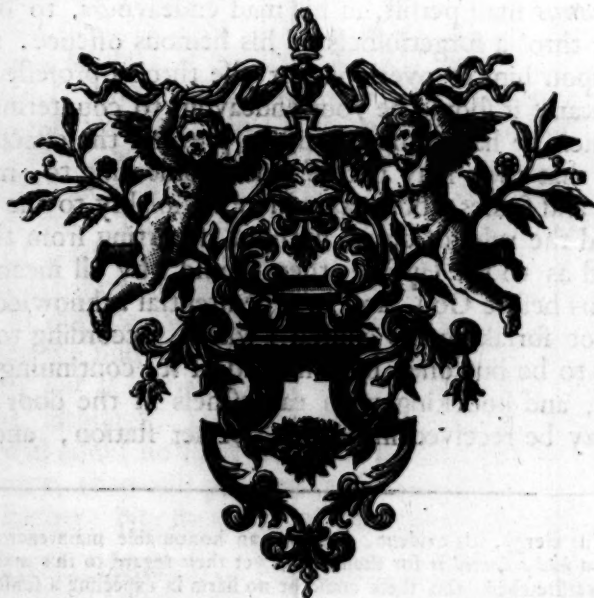
D. A. 253.
Epistle LXV.
Ephes. 5. 6, 7.

Christ, from whom they have departed. Nor let them hearken to such as would impose upon them by deceitful words, seeing it is written; *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: Be ye not therefore partakers with them.* Let no man then joyn himself in fellowship with such as behave presumptuously, having no fear of God, and entirely deserting the communion of his church. If there be any who have not patience ^k to stay out the time appointed for their penitential humiliations, and will not obey the commands of the church, but will rather chuse to follow more desperate measures; let such people charge upon themselves the consequence, when they feel it overtaking them in the day of judgment. For how can they pretend to deprecate the wrath of Christ in that day, who have ^l formerly disowned him, and now disown the authority of his church; and, in defiance of his bishops, who have preserved their integrity inviolate, and maintained the life of godliness, joyn themselves with others, in whom it hath plainly ^m languished, and is, in a manner, dead. My dearest brethren, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

^k To stay out the time.] Viz. the time of a legitimate and full penance.

^l Formerly.] Viz. in the persecution by lapsing.

^m Languished, and is, in a manner, dead.] Our author's known principle was, that the only true principle of spiritual life was in the church; and that they who were out of it, as to all the effects and purposes of a truly spiritual life, were dead; so that the bishops, who would pretend to exercise their function in opposition to the church, were the (*morientes*) dead bishops in our author's view, as the (*sani, viventes*) the living, healthful bishops, were they, who preserved their communion with the church inviolate.



EPISTLE

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXIV.

EPISTLE LXVI.

In the beginning of this year, one Florentius Pupianus, a bishop (it should seem) of Africa, and a confessor in the Decian persecution; having taken part with Novatian in his schism, wrote his mind to our author upon the subject of that quarrel, and, in terms of great contempt and contumely, signified to him, that he (Florentius) held him unworthy of his station and dignity in the church; and wanted (moreover) to have a scruple, then upon him, removed; how any who communicated with our author, could reasonably be judged to communicate with the church; accusing him also of the schism, which Novatian's pretences had occasioned. To all which our author returns his answer in this epistle, charging home upon Florentius, the arrogance and presumption of setting himself up as judge upon a bishop, duly elected and ordained. That the chronology of this letter is truly settled, appears from our author's mention of its being written in the 6th year of his episcopate.

CYPRIAN ^a (aliàs Thascius) to his brother Florentius (aliàs Pupianus) sendeth greeting.



Thought, ^b my brother, that by this time you had repented of lending your ear to such execrable reports of me, as even a *Gentile* would blush to hear. But now I find by your letter, that you are the same man as formerly, that you believe the same things of me which you did; and persist, immovably, in the belief of them; and lest the honour (forsooth) of your illustrious ^c martyrdom should suffer by holding communion with me; you are for making the strictest enquiry into my behaviour, and for setting up your self as a judge; I say not of me, (for who, or what am I?) but of God and Christ, who have ^d already pronounced upon the case before us, and who are in truth the makers of bishops. When Christ hath pronounced, that, tho' *two sparrows are sold for a farthing*; yet, that *neither of them shall fall on the ground without the will of our Father*; and when the whole course of his providence, as well as the tenour of his oracles, proves moreover to us, that even things of the smallest consequence come not to pass without his knowledge and permission;

g. i.

Matt. 10. 29.

^a (Aliàs Thascius.) *Pamelius* saith upon this, that the inscription of the epistle was a sarcastical return of our author upon *Florentius*, for inscribing to him *Thascius*, which was the name he left, when he turned christian, and exchanged it for *Cacilius*, which was the name of that good old presbyter by whom he was converted. So, since *Florentius* wrote to him, with an inscription to *Cyprian*, aliàs *Thascius*, he returned his answer with the like to *Florentius*, aliàs *Pupianus*. The name of *Thascius*, which indeed was his *Gentile* name, was also inserted in the sentence of our author's martyrdom; his surname, meanwhile, was *Cyprian*.

^b *My brother.*] Our author would not refuse *Florentius* this title; as *Opratus* afterwards allowed it to the *Donatists*; at the same time blaming their stiffness, in not giving it to the members of the church. *Rigaltius*.

^c *Martyrdom.*] *Florentius* had been a confessor in the *Decian* persecution; till then, he communicated with our author.

^d *Already pronounced.*] It hath been observed already, that a regular act of the church, in chusing, and ordaining bishops, was always supposed to be ratified in heaven; and so God and Christ were understood to make those bishops, who were duly elected and ordained so upon earth.

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVI.

John 5. 31,
32.

§. 2.
He answers
the objection
of pride im-
puted to him.

Deut. 17. 12,
13.

1 Sam. 8. 7.

John 18. 22.

§. 23.

what is it then, but to rebel against him, and to disbelieve God; to imagine, as you do, that his bishops are ordained in his church, without his cognisance or notice? For to believe, that they are ^e polluted and unworthy of their office, who are so ordained; what is it, but to believe that bishops are ordained in his church neither ^f by God, nor ^g thro' him? Or, it may be, you think that the testimony I give of my self, is greater and more favourable than what God would give of me: Whereas our Lord hath taught us, that no man's testimony of himself is credible, because each man is partial to his own cause and character, and will not easily be induced to report of himself unfavourably: But then, if when we speak of our selves, others will be our vouchers, and speak the same things for us; such a report is credible, and will be allowed as true; *If I bear witness, saith Christ, of my self, my witness is not true; there is another who beareth witness of me.* If then our Lord, who hereafter is to judge all things, did not expect nor desire to be believed in his own testimony of himself, but chose rather to be approved by the judgment and testimony of God, his Father; how much more reason is there for his servants to pursue the same measure, who are approved by the judgment and testimony of God, and glory therein? But now, it seems, the figments and calumnies of my enemies and wicked men have found more credit with you, than either the ^h judgment of God, or the integrity of my conduct, to which my conscience bears witness, and gives me this confidence of boasting; and you consider not, that ⁱ persons who have denied their religion, and forfeited thereby its privileges, who are excluded from the church, and from whom the Holy Ghost hath departed, must needs have naughty hearts and deceitful tongues, must harbour the most envenomed malice, and be the authors of the most execrable lyes; which whosoever believes, will be in great danger of keeping their authors company at the day of judgment.

2. As to what you intimate, that bishops should be humble, as Christ and his apostles were; I may appeal to all our brethren, to the *Gentiles* themselves, and even to you, whether I have not always been so; to you, I say, who once acknowledged me to be so, and loved me for being so, when you was a member of the church, and held communion with me in it. And who, at last, is most remote from humility; I, who am constantly engaged in the service of our brethren, and receive each of them, as they come into the church, with all expressions of kindness and satisfaction; or you, who set your self up as a bishop over a bishop, and a judge of him whom God hath appointed as a judge for the time being? When yet God hath said in the book of *Deuteronomy*; *And the man who will do presumptuously, and will not hearken to the priest, or unto the judge who shall be in those days, even that man shall die; and all the people, when they hear it, shall fear, and do no more presumptuously.* And again we read him saying to *Samuel*; *They have not despised you, but they have despised me.* Yet farther; when it was objected to our Lord in the gospel; *Answerest thou the High-priest so?* He replied in a manner which hath sufficiently taught us, that the reverence for the priest's character was to be maintained inviolate; and therefore he only vindicated his own innocence, but uttered not a word of contumely against the High-priest; *If, saith he, I have spoken evil, you might upbraid me with it, but if*

^e Polluted.] This refers to somewhat which *Florentinus* had rashly credited of our author, and objected to him. So much honour was certainly due to a regular ordination of the church, that, though the person ordained might possibly prove unworthy; yet, it should not easily, nor without good proof, be believed of him.

^f By God, nor through him.] Neither by his authority, nor through his providence.

^g Judgment of God.] Which had confirmed our author's ordination, and bore testimony to his uprightness by diverse extraordinary vouchsafements.

^h Persons who have denied, &c.] These were they whom *Florentinus* took part with against our author.

ⁱ You might upbraid.] See this cited and noted in epistle 3. §. 1. as also the following quotation from

Acts 23. 4.

well,

well, why smitest thou me? And when much the same question was put to the blessed apostle; *Dost thou thus insult and revile God's High-priest?* He answered without a word of contumely against that High-priest; although perhaps he might lawfully enough have exerted himself against those who had crucified our Lord; and thereby, lost their interest in God and Christ, and forfeited their temple and their priesthood: But instead thereof, he chose rather to acknowledge even the shadow of the sacerdotal character in the persons of priests, who had lost the substance of it, and therefore to reply; *I wist not, brethren, that he was the High-priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.* But you, perhaps, will turn this off by saying, that I was indeed a bishop before the persecution, when you communicated with me, but have ceased to be so since; for that the persecution truly raised you to the very pinnacle of the martyr's honour; whilst I sunk under the weight of an outlawry, when it was publickly proclaimed; ^k *If any one hath in his possession any part of the goods belonging to Cæcilius Cyprian, a bishop of the christians, &c.* So that they who would have no regard to God, who had appointed me a bishop, might however take the devil's word for it, who had outlawed me as a bishop.

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVI.
Acts 23. 4.

§. 5.

3. Nor do I boast, at last, of this, but mention it ^l with sorrow, that you should compel me to it, by setting up your self, in such a manner, a judge over Christ, whom we read, saying to his apostles, and thro' them to all his bishops, who succeed his apostles by ^m a vicarious ordination; *He that hear-eth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* For hence have heresies and schisms, from time to time, taken their rise, and still do take it; that the ⁿ one bishop presiding over every church is slighted, thro' the pride and insolence of certain presumptuous persons; and that the man whom God vouchsafes to accept and honour, is rejected by men as unworthy of his office. But what intolerable arrogance and haughtiness is this, in any man, to call before him bishops and priests, and to set himself up ^o for a judge of them; and thus, forthwith, unless I can clear my self to you, and stand acquitted by a sentence from you; lo! my flock, ^p for these six years, must have had no pastor; my brethren no bishop, my people no ruler, my church no governour, Christ no officer, and God no priest! To remedy these inconveniencies, Papias must stand forth and pronounce sentence, and must confirm the determination of God and Christ; lest such numbers of the faithful as have been called out of the world under my administration, should appear to have left it ^q without the privilege of communion, and without hope of salvation; lest so many converts as have come over to us from the Gentiles, should be judged not to have obtained, under my ministry, the grace of baptism, and of the Holy Spirit; lest

§. 3.
That bishops are successors to the apostles, and that rejecting them is really rejecting Christ.
Luke 10. 16.

^k *If any one, &c.* This was part of the form of the outlawry. Our author here turns the argument of Papias upon him; who had boasted, 'tis likely, to our author, that he truly was a confessor; and on that account the more regardable; to which our author replies, that his own outlawry amounted to little less.

^l *With sorrow that you should compel.* Much after this manner he had expressed himself in the beginning of the 6th §. ep. 59.

^m *A vicarious ordination.* Viz. being substituted in each other's room, by a regular course of succession, from the apostles, who were the first bishops. See note in §. 2. epist. 3. [*apostles*, i. e. indeed bishops.]

ⁿ *One bishop.* Not one bishop over the universal church; but one bishop, over each single church; which is the genuine language of pure antiquity.

^o *For a judge.* In a synodical way, it hath been observed already, that bishops might take cognisance of bishops, of their pretensions to their several sees, and of their behaviour in them. But for a single bishop to do this in an extrajudicial way, was the height of insolence and presumption.

^p *For these six years.* This helps us to fix, with tolerable certainty, upon the date of the epistle, as hath been observed already in the introduction to it.

^q *Without the privilege, &c.* *Sine spe salutis ex parte;* Where there was no bishop (who alone had authority to dispense the means of salvation) our author's argument seems to take it for granted, that there could be, at least, no covenanted assurance of an interest in God; because no effectual administration of the gospel ordinances.

A. D. 254. Epist. LXVI. the peace and communion of the church, granted by me upon trial of their several causes to so many lapsed, and so many penitents, should be nulled and rescinded by the interposal (truly) of your judicial authority! Vouchsafe, at last, then, to pronounce upon the case before you, and to confirm my title to my bishoprick, by your favourable sentence; that God and Christ may own themselves beholden to you, for restoring to their altar, and their people, a priest and a ruler!

§. 4. That a governor is necessary even to brutes and rogues, who cannot subsist without some head. 4. The bees have a king, and herds of cattle have their leader, and even rogues and robbers keep their faith to each other, and obey with all deference their head and captain. In this respect how much better than you, and more void of mischief are brutes and dumb creatures, and even cut-throats themselves amidst their bloody purposes, and all their engines of death and destruction? They acknowledge their head and leader with all due reverence, tho' he hath no sentence from heaven to confirm his choice; nor indeed any other authority, than what is agreed to be given him by a crew of pestilent and pernicious rascals.

§. 5. The emptiness of the excuse, which Pupianus sought to derive from ill reports of our author rashly credited. Eccles. 28. 28. Prov. 17. 4. 5. You pretend, that you must be satisfied as to a scruple which is got into your head. But how, I beseech you, did it get there? how? but by your own perverseness, your own will and choice, in believing so credulously, against a brother and a bishop, things so horrid, that they are unfit to be mentioned; in taking up the calumnies of others, and making their lies your own, by reporting them; forgetting all the while that it is written, *Hedge in thine ears with thorns, and hearken not to a perverse tongue*: And again, *A wicked doer giveth heed to the tongue of wicked men; but a righteous man regardeth not lying lips*. Wherefore I would ask you, did not this scruple get into the heads of those blessed martyrs, who were so full of the Holy Ghost, and just entering upon their privilege of being immediately admitted to the presence of God and Christ? These holy men sent letters out of their prison, to bishop Cyprian, acknowledging his character, and bearing their testimony to it. Wherefore did it not get into the heads of so many bishops, my colleagues, who, either were outlawed upon their retirement, or seized, and cast into irons; or else were banished, and so moved forwards to God in their glorious journey; or finally, were in some places punished with immediate death, and so received the illustrious crown of martyrdom? Wherefore, I ask again, did not so many of the people, committed by the providence of our Lord to my charge, fall into this scruple, who have here been gallant confessors, put to the question and the torture, and bear at this time in their bodies the scars of those honourable wounds which they received in that noble encounter? How comes it to pass, that so many unpotted virgins, so many commendable widows; in fine, so many churches throughout the world, as are joined in communion with me, have never once thought of this scruple, which you cannot get over? But it may be, you think, that all who have communicated with me are polluted, by so doing, and have forfeited their title to eternal life, by the contagion of my guilt; whilst Pupianus is the only person who hath preserved his integrity, the only man of modesty and virtue; who therefore would not join with me, and so is to be the only person, who shall dwell in paradise, and in the kingdom of heaven.

[Vouchsafe.] The reader, it is presumed, will easily discern the irony and banter, wherewith our author here addresses Pupianus.

[No sentence from heaven.] As a bishop regularly chosen and ordained was always supposed to have.

[Hedge in.] See this passage cited and noted in §. 95. of the 3^d book of Testimonies.

[But a righteous man.] So the LXX. and the Arabick and Syriack versions; but the Hebrew, the Chaldee paraphrase and vulgar Latin favour our English construction.

[Immediately admitted.] See note in §. the last of the Exhortation to Martyrdom: without suffering him to wait for it; where this privilege is noted.

6. You write, moreover, that a considerable part of the church is, thro' my means, dispersed and disunited; not recollecting, that the whole body of the people, truly belonging to the church, is compacted together by indissoluble bonds of unity; and none continue out of her fold, but they who, if they were within it, would deserve to be cast out of it; nor will our Lord, the guardian and protector of his church, ever suffer his wheat to be scatter'd from his floor, nor any thing but the chaff to be separated from his church; as the apostle hath hinted, where he saith, *What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid! for God is true, and every man a liar.* And our Lord, in his gospel, when many of his disciples forsook him, is represented turning to the twelve, and saying, *Will ye also go away? Then Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: And we believe, and are sure, that thou art the Son of the living God.* Peter there speaks, upon whom the church had been built, shewing and affirming, in the name of the church, that, however the proud and presumptuous multitude might depart, yet the church her self never would depart from Christ; and that the church is made up of a people united to their bishop, and a flock adhering to their shepherd: From whence you ought to understand, that * the bishop is in the church, and the church in the bishop; and that they are not in the church, who are not with the bishop of it; and therefore that they impose upon themselves, who slyly creep in, and imagine they hold communion with certain persons, when yet they have it not with their own bishop; whereas the catholick church is one, and cannot be divided; but is connected together by the cement of her bishops closely and intimately adhering to each other.

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVI.
§. 6.

The objection answered of many being thrown out of the church by our author.

Rom. 3. 3, 4

John 6. 67, 68, 69.

7. Upon the whole, my Brother, if you have any reverence for the majesty of God, who ordaineth Bishops; if, any due regard to Christ, who, by his authority, guidance and influence; governeth both bishops themselves, and the church with them; if you will form your estimate upon the conduct of bishops, not so much by human prejudice and passion, as by God's determination; if, (late, as it is,) you will truly repent of your insolence, pride and rashness; if you will seriously endeavour to reconcile your self to God and Christ, whom I serve with all sincerity, and to whom I * offer sacrifices without intermission, as well in the seasons of persecution, as in peaceable and settled times; I may perhaps have some regard to communion with you; yet not without an awful reserve for the sentence of God in this matter, nor without consulting my Lord and Master, whether he will vouchsafe, by some token of his pleasure, to assure me of his permission, that you should be received to the peace and communion of his church. For I well remember what hath been already revealed to me; nay, what indeed hath been directly enjoined me;

§. 7.

Our author exhorts Papias to repentance.

[The bishop is in the church, and the church in the bishop.] Where these two were separated, there was a schism. If the bishop went over to heresy or schism, or lapsed in time of persecution; a rent was made, and the other bishops of the catholick church were then to shew themselves interested in the whole, by giving notice to the flock of such a bishop's error, according to the principle laid down in §. 4. and §. 5. of the *Unity of the Church*. See notes [Episcopate is single.] in §. 4. *ibid.* and [Zelus ordained bishop in his stead.] Ep. 50. If, on the other hand, any of the flock separated from their pastor, they made the schism; for a church, in our author's opinion, could not subsist, without a bishop and his people united to each other. And 'tis to be hoped the reader, by this time, is fully apprized of our author's notions with regard to church-unity; which are very much the same with the Ignatian principles.

[God's determination.] The determination of God upon the case of bishops once regularly chosen hath already been remarked upon.

[Offer sacrifices.] Viz. The sacrifices of christian worship; and especially the eucharistical oblations of bread and wine. These, our author saith, he offered in times of persecution, as well as safety; so that he stuck by his people in times of the utmost distress and difficulty; and they knew where they might resort to him upon any emergency which claimed his help.

[Token of his pleasure.] This hints to us our author's old resort to visions. See note [vouchsafe me a revelation of his pleasure.] Ep. 7. Here he is very express, as the reader will observe, in reciting the orders he so received.

by

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVI.

Gen. 37. 19,
20.

by the authority of my Lord and Master, whom, as his faithful servant, I am resolved to obey with all punctuality; and who, among other things which he was pleased to direct and reveal to me, added the following intimation, "*He therefore who believeth not Christ ordaining bishops; will at length be forced to believe him avenging them.*" I am well aware, however, that the whole notion of dreams and visions is ridiculed and scouted, by many, as a mere impertinence; but then it is by them, who would rather believe any thing to the prejudice, than to the advantage, of bishops. This should be no wonder, when it is remembered what *Joseph's* brethren said of him, *Behold this dreamer cometh; come now therefore, and let us slay him*; and yet what this dreamer dreamed, was afterwards fulfilled in his favour, to the great confusion of those who would have slain, and actually did sell, him; and tho' they would not give credit to his words, they were forced, in the conclusion, to believe them verified in deeds. As to what you have done, either in the times of persecution, or of peace; it would be ridiculous in me to pretend to sit as a judge upon you, when you have set your self up as a judge of me. This is the substance of what I had to offer, by way of answer to you; which my trust in God, and my consciousness of my own innocence, have moved me to write. You have my letter, and I have yours; and both will be read over before the tribunal of Christ at the day of judgment.

^b Both will be read over. From the multiplicity of business which is to come on at the day of judgment, some have thought that solemn transaction would take up a thousand years. As to the reading over the letters of *Papianus*, and our author; no more is thence to be inferred, than that an account would then be taken of them; as indeed our Lord before had told us, (*Matt. 12. 36.*) that men should give an account of every idle word which they should speak. Bp. Fell.



A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVII.

EPISTLE LXVII.

Basilides, a Spanish bishop, being justly deposed, and Sabinus being substituted in his room, applied to pope Steven, not in the way of appeal, (as Baronius would represent the case) but to gain the advantage and credit of holding communion with the bishop of such an eminent see; and he so far succeeded as to surprize pope Steven in it, and thereby gain'd his point. Certain bishops of Spain, upon this advantage gained by Basilides, communicated with him. Wherefore Felix a presbyter, with the people of Legio, and Asturica, neighbouring cities, and Lælius a deacon, with the people of Emerita, a neighbouring city likewise, wrote to our author, and his synod, (assembled as usually, just after Easter) upon the case of this Basilides, and of one Martialis, which was much the same; and sent their letter by Sabinus and Felix, who were substituted in the room of the said Martialis and Basilides, to which Felix bishop of Saragossa added a letter also; and they had, all, the following answer, of much the same date with the foregoing epistle, as the subject of it is much the same with that to Epictetus and the people of Assuri.

Cyprian, Cæcilius, Primus, Polycarpus, Nicomedes, Lucianus, Successus, Sedatus, Fortunatus, Januarius, Secundus, Pomponius, Honoratus, Victor, Aurelius, Sattius, Petrus, another Januarius, Saturninus, another Aurelius, Venantius, Quietus, Rogatianus, Tenax, Felix, Faustus, Quintus, another Saturninus, Lucius, Vincentius, Libosus, Geminus, Marcellus, Iambus, Adelphius, Victorius, and Paulus; to their brethren, in the Lord, the presbyter Felix, and to the people severally dwelling at Legio and Asturica, as likewise to the deacon Lælius, and to the people dwelling at Emerita, send greeting.

WE perused, dear brethren, in full synod, the letters you sent by Felix and Sabinus, our fellow-bishops, and were convinced by them of^b your integrity, the soundness of your faith, and your fear of God; in them you signify to us your opinion, that Basilides and Martialis, as being tainted with the guilt of^c idolatrous libels, and

§. 1. 7

^a As Baronius would represent.] If the letter of Basilides be any argument for appeals to Rome; the letter of Felix, &c. to which this 67 Epistle contains an answer, is every whit as strong an argument for appeals from Rome to Carthage. But indeed the argument is neither way conclusive; and there is nothing farther to be inferred from it, than, what we are otherwise sufficiently acquainted with, viz. the primitive way of distant sees and bishops holding communion with each other, by their *litteræ formæ*, which were letters of mutual acknowledgment, whereby the several bishops of the catholic church preserved and maintained the unity of the episcopal college.

^b Your integrity, &c.] Viz. Because the course they took represented them as using their best endeavours to proceed in this affair by proper steps, and not to err in it.

^c Idolatrous libels.] What these were, the reader may find explained in note [own'd himself she does] in §. 14. of the *Case of the lapses*; as likewise in note [scandalous subscriptions] §. 2. ep. 30.

A. D. 253.
EPISTLE LXV.

having their consciences burthened with the weight of divers horrid crimes, ought not to continue in the exercise of their episcopal function, nor in the administration of God's priesthood; you desire, moreover, that our sentiments upon this matter may be returned to you, and that your just and necessary solicitude about it, may find some relief, either from the comfort of our advice, or from the assistance of our opinion and judgment in it. To this desire of yours an answer may readily be fetch'd, not so much from our advices, as from the rules of our religion, which have long ago directed what sort of persons was fittest to serve at the altar, and to celebrate the sacrifices of God's worship. For in the book of *Exodus* God forewarns *Moses*, saying unto him, *Let the priests who come near to the Lord sanctify themselves, lest the Lord forsake them.* And again, *When they come near unto the altar, to minister in the holy place, they shall not bring sin upon them, lest they die.* Thus likewise our Lord ordains in the book of *Leviticus*, *Whoever hath any spot or blemish in him, let him not approach to offer oblations unto God.* Wherefore since these things are so clearly laid down, and were prescribed so long ago to us; our practice should certainly flow in the channel appointed by God for it, without any respect of persons; nor is it within the reach of any human power to relax upon a case where God hath expressly interposed, and prescribed the rule to us: Nor ought we to forget what our Lord hath spoken to the *Jews*, by the Prophet *Isaiah*, blaming, and being angry with them for following the doctrines of men, at the expence of God's appointment; *This people (saith he) draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me; but their heart is removed far from me: Yet in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men:* And our Lord, in his gospel, hath repeated this observation of them, saying, *Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*

§. 2. These things being considered, as they ought to be, by us with a religious reverence; we should chuse none but persons of an unblemish'd character to be ordained priests, who by offering up sacrifices to God with due sanctity, may, with some likelihood and hope of acceptance, have their prayers heard, which they shall put up for the welfare and safety of the people committed to them; especially since we find it written, that *God heareth not a sinner; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.* Wherefore they should be chosen for the priesthood, of whom, after the best and most impartial enquiry made of them, there is most reason to think, that they will be heard by God. Nor let the people flatter themselves, that they are untouched by the contagion of this guilt, when they communicate with a priest, who is a sinner, and are found consenting to his unjust and

§. 2.
That none
should be or-
dained but
men of an un-
blemished cha-
racter, and
that with the
privacy of the
people.
John 9. 31.

[Our opinion and judgment.] Tho' the See of Carthage had no direct authority over these churches, or the bishops of them; yet the rules of catholic correspondence between church and church, bishop and bishop, made a solemn opinion of any church or synod, especially so eminent as those of *Africa*, of great moment to any cause at that time depending; since the rest would very probably maintain or reject communion with that bishop, or those bishops, in whose favour or prejudice such a sentence should be pronounced. For the people were every where taught to acknowledge or reject their respective bishops, from the example of other bishops, (known to be in communion with the catholic church) acknowledging or refusing them.

[Forsake them.] See this passage cited and noted in ep. 65. §. 1.

[Communications.] See this also noted *ibid.*

[Isaiah 29. 13.] This passage the reader may find cited and noted in §. 6. epist. 83.

[Priests.] This word signifies, with our author, usually, and by way of eminence, bishops, who were priests in the highest and most exalted sense of that word; though presbyters had a portion of this priesthood under them.

[Are found consenting.] *Viz.* When the case was properly before them, when the incapacity of their bishop to continue his function was either thro' notoriety of fact, or thro' the admonition of neighbouring bishops within the catholic church, represented to them; then it was their duty to proceed to the nomination of another, the nomination at that time being theirs; as in like case of a bishop's incapacity at this time, it would be the duty of those, who have the power, to furnish the people with a capable pastor. So

and irregular continuance in his episcopal function; whereas the judgment of God hath interposed and told them, by the prophet *Hoshea*, saying, *Their sacrifices shall be as the bread of mourning, all who eat thereof shall be polluted*. Wherein he plainly hints to us, that all will be guilty of sin, who shall be polluted with the sacrifices of an irregular and profane pastor. This we find likewise intimated in the book of *Numbers*, when *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* claimed to themselves the privilege of sacrificing, in opposition to *Aaron* the priest; in which case our Lord gave orders by *Moses*, that the people should be separated from them, lest, by being joined with wicked men, they should become partakers of their guilt. *Depart* (saith he) *from the tents of these hardened men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in their sin*. Wherefore a people, who would obey the rules of the gospel, and approve their fear of God, should separate themselves from a sinful bishop, and should not partake with a profane priest in his sacrifices; especially since the chief power of choosing worthy priests, and of rejecting unworthy ones, is lodged with them: Which rule, we see, proceeded originally from God's authority, that a bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, in the most publick manner, and be approved as worthy by the common suffrages of the whole body; even as our Lord commanded *Moses* in the book of *Numbers*, saying; *Take Aaron thy brother, and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto the mount, before all the congregation; and strip Aaron of his robe, and put it upon Eleazar his son, and Aaron shall be gathered unto his fathers, and shall dye there*. God directs his priest to be made so before all the congregation, and thereby shews us, that he would not have the ordinations of his bishops performed but in the presence, and with the privity of the people; that so, the crimes of wicked men may be discovered, or the merits of good men be celebrated and applauded, and that the ordination may proceed regularly and fairly, which hath first received the approbation of the whole body. This rule, thus appointed by God, we find afterwards observed in the *Acts* of the apostles, when *Peter* spoke to the people upon the point of substituting some one to be an apostle in the room of *Judas*; *Then Peter stood up, in the midst of the disciples*, where the whole company were met together in one place. Nor do we find the apostles observing this rule in the case of bishops and priests only, but even in the ordination of deacons; concerning which it is recorded in their acts, that *The twelve called the multi-*

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVII.
Hof. 9. 4.

Numb. 16. 26.

Numb. 20.
25. 26.

Acts I. 15.

Acts 6. 2.

So we proceeded at the reformation; and, upon these principles, that process was justifiable; tho' the people have no power to call their bishop to account; yet, when he contracts a moral incapacity for his office, which becomes by any means notorious to them; they ought, we see here, to be provided otherwise. See note [Zetus ordained in his room.] in ep. 50. and note [one episcopal chair.] in §. 3. ep. 43. N. B. The 15th canon of the 7th general council expressly asserts this power to the laity, of separating themselves from their bishop when notoriously heretical, in points heretofore determined; even without a synodical sentence passing again upon him.

^k *Hardened*.] *Durissimorum*. So our author chose to render the *σκληροὶ* of the LXX, that he might bring it the nearer to the character of the *Novatians*, whose rigour, in the case of penance entitled them properly to the name of *hard-hearted people*.

^l *A sinful bishop*.] Not every sin contracted this moral incapacity; but a manifest corruption of gospel truths, especially when notified by the bishops of the catholick church; or a notorious departure from the gospel, which was the case of idolaters; or any of those great sins, which exposed the guilty person to penance for them, obliged the people, whose the nomination at that time was, to proceed to a new one. But then a great deal here depended upon the notification of their pastor's sin to them. They were not to take up with suspicions, nor had power to call him before them. But he must have been convicted of it in proper course before proper judges, ere it was allowed them, to hold him guilty. We must remember that *Basides* and *Marcion* had been regularly deposed, and others substituted in their room. And our author's general reasoning must be interpreted with a due regard to the particular case from which it took its rise.

^m *Chief power of choosing*.] If the nomination was then the people's, it doth not follow that it ought to be so always; if inconveniences were found in it, it was changeable, as being a point of discipline only; which (as *Tertullian* hath observed of it) admits of alterations. *His lege sed monemus: carere jam discipline et jurisdictionis adiuvantem correctionem*. De Veland. Virg. c. 1.

ⁿ *Before all the congregation*.] So the LXX; and the 20th verse expresses the transaction to have passed in that publick manner, tho' the *Hebrew* doth not represent it as so directed to *Moses*, 9. 25.

tude

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVII.

rude of the disciples together, and said unto them, &c. All this diligence and caution, in calling the people together, were therefore used, ° that no unworthy person might creep into the service of the altar, or into any share of the sacerdotal dignity. For, that unworthy persons are sometimes ordained, not according to the will of God, but thro' the rashness and presumption of men, (and that it is exceedingly displeasing to him, when ordinations proceed not regularly, and as they should do, he hath most plainly told us by *Hoshea* the prophet, saying; *They have set up for themselves a king, but not by me.*

§. 3.
For the regular process of ordinations it was fit that the neighbouring bishops of the province should meet upon them.

Wherefore the rule which we have handed down to us from God himself, and from the practice of his apostles, should be observed with all exactness; as it is indeed already amongst us, and generally amongst the provinces here; *viz.* That in celebrating our ordinations, the neighbouring bishops of the province, where a bishop is to be ordained for any people, should meet upon the place, and choose a bishop in the presence of the people, who best know the lives and conversations of the several persons who may happen to be named, and have had opportunities of observing their behaviour and conduct. This rule, we find, you took along with you, in the ordination of our colleague *Sabinus*, who was unanimously chosen by the votes of all the people, and the approbation of the bishops, who were there assembled, and who had written letters to you beforehand on his behalf; and so the episcopate was conferred upon him, and he received imposition of hands accordingly to succeed *Basilides*. Nor can an ordination, regularly and validly administered, be nulled or rescinded; because after the discovery of his crimes, and his own confession of them, when accused by his guilty conscience, *Basilides* went on to *Rome*, and there imposed upon our colleague *Stephanus*, living at a distance, and ignorant of the whole transaction, and endeavoured to get himself restored unjustly to his charge, from which he had been justly deposed. All this only tends to accumulate the crimes of *Basilides*, rather than to abolish the remembrance of them; since to his former account hereby is added the guilt of endeavouring to circumvent and cheat. Nor is he indeed so much, or truly, to be blamed, who suffered himself, thro' negligence, to be imposed upon, as he is to be held in abhorrence, who fraudulently gained access to him. But tho' *Basilides* may thus make his way to man, he cannot to God; inasmuch as we find it written, that *God is not mocked*. Nor will *Martialis* at last be able to find his account in tricking; nor will he be fit to hold his bishoprick, who is entangled in the guilt of such heinous crimes; since the apostle

Galat. 6. 7.

° *That no unworthy.* This informs us of the reason why the people were interested, to the degree they were, in ordinations; that they might bear their testimony to the character of the persons to be ordained. And thus much of the ancient practice still remains with us. *Ensebius* hath complained of the tumults attending popular elections, which at last were only nominations, and the bishops of the province judged of the fitness of the person so nominated, and either rejected, or ordained him, as they thought it proper.

¶ *Choose a bishop.* Whatever agency the people had in choosing, it was not, we see, exclusive of the neighbouring bishops choice; who had indeed such a negative upon the people, that, howsoever they might and did ordinarily comply with their inclinations, yet sometimes they would ordain another person, where there was notorious reason for it.

¶ *Imposed.* So that the pope of *Rome* was not then infallible.

¶ *Living at a distance.* This was the reason of those canons, which, in after times, directed every case to be determined, where the fact was committed; and the council of *Sardica* (in its famous 5th canon) gave no other power to the bishop of *Rome*, than to grant a re-hearing to the appellant, if he judged himself injured; but still the cause was to be re-heard by the neighbouring bishops; only he of *Rome* might send his own legates to sit with them, if he pleased; but he could not draw the cause to his own court.

¶ *Restored unjustly.* If pope *Stephanus* had restored him, our author, we see, makes no scruple to affirm, that such a restoration had been unjust. It was always, in a controverted case, the method for each (contending) bishop, to procure his title to be owned by letters of communion from the bishops of the most eminent sees; which was the way to bring others into his interests. And so 'tis no wonder, that the bishop of *Rome* was, upon all these occasions, much resorted to; nor that great court was made to him. But this infers no peculiar authority; only an eminent share of honour paid to his eminency in the church. *Propter potentiam principalem*, saith *Irenaeus*, b. 3. c. 3.

hath

hath told us, that *A bishop must be blameless as the steward of God*. Wherefore since (according to the tenor of your letter, and the testimony of our colleagues, *Felix* and *Sabinus*, as also of another *Felix* of *Saragossa*, a strict adherent to the faith and truth, since I say,) it appears, from all your assertions, that *Basildes* and *Martialis* are tainted with the guilt of idolatrous certificates; and that *Basildes*, besides the forelaid guilt, had, moreover, blasphemed God in his sickness, and confessed that he did so, voluntarily relinquishing his bishoprick, as knowing himself unworthy to hold it, and had entered accordingly upon a state of penance, to deprecate the wrath of God, esteeming himself sufficiently happy, if he might only be admitted to lay-communion; since also *Martialis*, besides the guilt of attending the vile and filthy entertainments of the *Gentiles*, and of frequenting their colleges for a great while together; besides the sin of depositing his children's bodies in their burial-places, with foreign rites and ceremonies, and of burying them with strangers; (I say, since besides all this, *Martialis*) hath acknowledged by a publick act, before a *Ducenarian* procurator, that he had joined in idolatrous worship, and denied Christ; and since there are many other grievous crimes, of which *Basildes* and *Martialis* both are guilty; they aim, to no manner of purpose, at holding their bishopricks; it being evident, that such men, as they, are utterly disqualified from presiding in the church of Christ, and from offering sacrifices to God: Especially since our colleague *Cornelius*, a peaceable and righteous bishop, and honoured with martyrdom thro' the mercies of our Lord, long ago joined with us, and with all the bishops throughout the world, in decreeing, that such persons might indeed be admitted to penance; but should ever continue debarred from all orders of the clergy, and from all sacerdotal honours.

4. Nor should you, dear brethren, be moved or disconcerted with observing, that the faith of some is wavering and slippery, that the fear of God hath little influence upon men of unsettled principles, or that others do not abide in a good agreement together. These things, it hath been foretold, should happen, towards the end of the world; our Lord, and his apostles, have jointly confirmed it to us, that as the world wears away, and anti-christ approaches, every thing which is good should wear away with the one, and every thing which is evil should advance with the other. Yet even in these latter times, the gospel hath not so far lost its power and energy in the church of God, nor are the faith and constancy of christians so far sunk, but that there is a good proportion of bishops left, who have never yielded to these storms, but have saved themselves out of the general wreck and ruine, and have preserved the honour of religion, and their own character, inviolate, amidst all the endeavours which were used to slur it. We remember well, and consider it as a rule and pattern to us, that when others sneaked and betrayed it, *Mattathias* boldly stood up to vindicate the law of God; that when the *Jews* revolted from their religion, *Elias* stood firmly by it, and contended for it with great gallantry and courage; that neither

A.D. 254.
Epist. LXXVII.
T. VII. 7m.

S. 4.
That the baseness of the lapsed should be no stumbling block to such as have stood their ground, especially since it was foretold.
Luke 18. 8.

2 Tim. 3. 1.

1 Matt. 2. 19.

1 Kings 19. 10.

Basildes.] As he was joined in his communion with *Sabinus*, who appears with certainty to have been appointed successor to *Basildes*; and as both of them are acknowledged bishops; it is very probable that *Felix* was also the appointed successor of *Martialis*.

To lay-communion.] He expected not then a restoration to his office, but held himself content, if he might communicate as a layman. See note [on 4th epistle] in epist. 64. S. 1.

filthy entertainments.] As being always attended with libations to their *Neubus* deities. *Bp. Fell* or *Colleges*.] This might either mean the incorporated societies of *Roman* priests, augurs, soothsayers, &c. or else any other incorporated society for traffick and business, which was always put under the more immediate protection of some one, or other of their *Neubus*. *Bp. Fell* got two colleges added to his burial-place.] As the *Gentile* superstition consisted very much of worship paid to dead persons, and of great and busy solicitude concerning them; they who buried their friends with them, were necessarily engaged in a participation of their ceremonies. *Bp. Fell* need not have troubled himself with this note.

He signed a paper, signifying himself to have joined in an idolatrous worship.] See note [on 4th epistle] in S. 3. epist. 39. *Bp. Fell* got two colleges added to his burial-place.] This was an officer concerned in the revenue, who derived his name of *Ducenarius*, from his salary of 200 *Sesterces*. *Rigobert* says, that this officer was appointed on account of his being a *Ducenarius*.

of *Ducenarian* procurator.] This was an officer concerned in the revenue, who derived his name of *Ducenarius*, from his salary of 200 *Sesterces*. *Rigobert* says, that this officer was appointed on account of his being a *Ducenarius*.

A. D. 254.
Epist. LXVII.
Dan. 6. 20.

Dan. 3. 12.

Rom. 3. 3. 4.

Psal. 50. 17.
18.

Rom. 1. 30.
32.

the melancholy circumstance of his being in a foreign land, nor the hottest assaults of persecution, had power enough with *Daniel* to deter him from frequent confessions of his faith, which he gloriously, and often, acknowledged in the seasons of greatest danger; and that the three gallant youths were neither moved by the tenderness of their age, nor by the menaces wherewith they were assaulted; but bravely withstood the terrors of the *Babylonian* furnace, and in the midst of their captivity vanquished a victorious Monarch. Let such look to it, as have either abandoned and betrayed their religion, or shrank from the acknowledgment of it in the article of danger, and now would rise up within the church against the church, and have already begun to weaken the interests of the gospel. But still there are many left, who have at heart a reverence for their religion, with affections devoted to their Lord and God; nor doth the baseness of some depress or demolish the true christian faith, but rather exalts and builds it up, proves a spur and incentive to it; according to what the blessed apostle *St. Paul* hath written, by way of exhortation; *What if some of them have fallen away from the faith? Hath their unbelief made the faith of God of none effect? God forbid! for God is true, and every man a liar.* If then every man be a liar, and God only true; what should the servants of God, and especially his bishops do, but leave the lies and errors of men, and abide in the truth of God, by keeping his commandments? Wherefore, dear brethren, altho' some of our colleagues think fit to neglect the discipline of our Lord, and are so rash as to communicate with *Basilides* and *Martialis*; yet that ought not to disconcert our faith; inasmuch as the Holy Ghost hath pointed his threats to such, saying; *Thou hatest discipline, and castest my words behind thee; When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him; and hast been partaker with adulterers.* In which words he sheweth, that they are partakers of other men's guilt, who join themselves with such as have incurred it. And the same thing is likewise asserted by the apostle, saying; *Backbiters, despiteful haters of God, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, who knowing the judgment of God, did not consider, that they who commit such things are worthy of death; nor only they who commit them, but who agree with such as do them.* He saith, that they are worthy of death who do such things; and he sheweth, moreover, that not only they, who do those evil things, but they who agree with such as do them, are liable to punishment; who, by joining in unlawful communion with evil men and sinners, such as have submitted to no penance for their sin, are defiled by their commerce with guilty persons, and by partaking with them in their fault, share with them in their punishment. Wherefore, dear brethren, we highly approve and applaud your carefulness in this affair, which you have managed so agreeably to your character; and we farther exhort, and

Basilides and Martialis. As these men are all along represented equal in their crimes; so, it is reasonable to presume, they were in their punishment; and therefore, as the one was certainly deposed, so, very probably, was the other. [See note [Fals] in §. 3. of this epistle.]
Join themselves. This is censured as partaking with the guilt of the guilty persons; viz. when their guilt had been duly notified; and they had been regularly deposed for it.
Did not consider. This reading is countenanced by divers MSS. of great credit and authority; by the vulgar Latin, by *Clement Romanus*, and by others of the ancient fathers, as well as by our author.
Defiled by their commerce. It cannot be enough inculcated upon the reader to be careful in observing, that these bishops had been deposed; one of them most certainly, and the other so probably, that no doctrine of moment can be built upon the negative side of the question. And therefore what our author here saith, is to be interpreted with a due regard to the circumstances of the persons, whom here he exhorts these people to avoid. Their guilt had been duly notified, and a sentence passed upon it. We may farther allow, from our author's reasoning, that it implied an obligation upon the people, when the bishop had notoriously disqualified himself for the exercise of his function, to get him removed from them, by those rules and methods of discipline, which were at that time in use. But a power of separating from him, without any regard to those rules and methods, would have made mad work; and there is no reason to think our author a favourer of such an irregular procedure.

persuade

persuade you, as earnestly as we can, by these present, not to join in communion with profane and polluted bishops, but to go on preserving the purity of your faith untainted, with all imaginable care, and zeal. In so doing we wish you all prosperity and success, and take our leave of you.

A. D. 254.
Epistle
LXVIII.

EPISTLE LXVIII.

The Gallican bishops, and amongst them Faustinus, bishop of Lyons, having written to pope Steven upon the case of one Marcianus, bishop of Arles, desiring Steven not to hold communion with the said Marcianus; (who had joined himself with Novatian) and not having been able to make any impressions upon Steven, by their addresses to him; Faustinus had written to our author, desiring his interest with Steven, for this purpose; who accordingly wrote this letter to remind him of his duty; and to back the request of the Gallican bishops. Some doubts there have been whether this letter were genuine. It must certainly have been written before the unhappy quarrel between these two bishops; for the Gallican bishops would never have desired our author's interposal with pope Steven after that quarrel; nor is there any objection against its being written before it, but what is easily answered. Augustin, in his 6th book of baptism, against the Donatists, mentions an epistle of our author to pope Steven, which meddles not with the question of baptism; now there are but two extant from our author to that pope, which are this and the 72^d; the 72^d takes express notice of that question; and therefore there is reason to believe, that Augustin had then his eye upon this. As to its not appearing in divers MSS, 'tis the case of several others, which yet pass unquestioned.

Written after
his return.

CYPRIAN to his brother Steven sendeth greeting.

I Austinus, our colleague, dearest brother who dwelleth at Lyons, hath written to me more than once, upon a subject, which I am very sensible you have been made acquainted with, as well by him, as by our fellow-bishops of the same province; viz. That Marcianus of Arles, hath joined with Novatian, and thereby hath forsaken the unity of our body, and broken all the rules of our sacerdotal correspondence, holding that rigorous opinion of the hereticks, that all comfort from the mercies of God, and all the assistances of his paternal clemency, should be withheld from his penitent servants; and tho' they heartily bewail their sin, and knock at the doors of the church, with all the marks of a sincere desire to be admitted; yet that their wounds should have no balsom applied to them, but that they should be left without any hope of peace and reconciliation, and so abandoned to the rage of wolves, to devour, and of the devil, to make a prey of them. This is a business, dearest brother,

S. i.

Rules of our sacerdotal correspondence. Which required the bishops of the several churches to disown any person, who was regularly cast out of the church, or who set himself, as Novatian did, at the head of a schism.

which

A. D. 254.
Epistle
LXVIII.

which it is ^{our} province to rectify, and to give all proper assistance, by our advices and consultations, in it; who, considering the mercies of God, and sitting at the helm of the church, to steer and govern it, do to extend the vigour of her censures to sinners; as not, at the same time, to deny them an interest in the compassions of God, for raising up such as have fallen, and for the cure of such as are maimed and wounded. Wherefore you should by all means write to our brethren, the several bishops of the two *Gauls*, and open your mind fully to them; that they may no longer suffer the proud and stubborn *Marcianus*, who proves himself such an enemy to the mercies of God, and the salvation of his brethren, to insult our college, and to pretend that he is not yet excommunicated by us; but that he truly taking part with *Novatian*, and pursuing his interest, hath separated himself from our communion; whereas even this *Novatian*, whose interest he follows, hath been long ago excommunicated, and judged an enemy to the church; and when he sent his agents hither to us, desiring to be admitted to our Communion, he received for answer, from a council of many bishops, who were here at that time assembled, that he had begun the rupture, and could not be admitted by any of us to our communion; as having attempted to erect a profane altar, to set up a spurious chair, and to offer impious sacrifices, in opposition to the true priest, to *Cornelius*, I mean, who was duly ordained a bishop of the catholic church, with the approbation of God, and by the choice of clergy and people; upon the whole, that if he had a mind to repent, and return to a sound mind, he should submit to penance, and so, in a becoming posture, should humbly sue for a re-admission to the church. But now how impertinent and absurd would it be in us, my dearest brother, to suffer our selves to be imposed upon, and the majesty and dignity of the church to be withal insulted, by these favourers of *Novatian*, who hath so lately been rejected, whose pretensions have been refuted, and whose person hath been excommunicated by all the bishops of God throughout the world! Wherefore dispatch away your

Our province. It was the province of bishops, especially those of the more eminent sees, to assist each other with their advice; to admonish each other of any danger or error; to direct their letters of communion, in disputed cases, where they judged them due, and to set a mark upon such as should walk disorderly. *St. Cyprian* was nearest in situation to these *Gaulish* sees, and so the first resort was to him, as bishop of a very eminent see in their neighbourhood; but when he did not interpose to repress the influence of *Marcianus*, application, we find, was made to our author, as the bishop of next account and figure, within reach; and he used *St. Cyprian*, as one colleague should another, who had equal portions of the same office. They had neither of them indeed any direct authority in this affair; and their letters upon it were rather *persuasive*, than *authoritative*. The authority was, properly, the provincial synod's; they only used their interest, as men of eminence and distinction.

Gauls. Viz. That on this side of the *Alps*, and beyond them. *Gallia Cisalpina*, and *Transalpina*; the some MSS. read it *Gaul*, in the singular.

By denying communion, the means of pardon and salvation to the sinner. Viz. By denying communion, the means of pardon and salvation to the sinner.

Our College. Viz. of Bishops, in which pope *Cyprian*, and pope *Cyprian*, had equal interest.

Directing to be admitted. If there were now any claims on foot in favour of the *Novatian* heresy, this passage would as strongly prove that see the center of ecclesiastical unity, as any arguments which the *Romanists* could urge in proof of their's being so. Here we have an *African* synod judging upon the pretensions of two anti-popes, and determining which should, or should not, be acknowledged as the bishop of *Rome*. But this was indeed exactly agreeable to that aristocratical form of government, whereby the church of Christ was at that time regulated. And the *African* synod did no more, than what any other synod might have done, when the question had been started, to which of the contending bishops, letters of communion should be directed.

Many bishops. Viz. of this synod, that it consisted of 60 bishops. *Ep. Fell.* *As lately.* Viz. About three years ago. *When Marcianus, Agrippinus, Marcianus, and Longinus, were sent by him into Africa to solicit his cause there.* *Ep. Fell.*

Direct your letters. Here the *Romanists* think they see most plainly, the supremacy of their bishop; who yet was desired to do no more in this affair, than what was perfectly agreeable to an aristocratical form of church government; what was usual for the neighbouring bishops of larger sees to do in order of this nature; and what our author himself often did in *Africa*, and elsewhere. As well might we say, that what *St. Cyprian* had been desired to do by the bishops of *Gaul*, he did by orders from *St. Cyprian*; because every bishop had so far a concern and interest in the whole church, as made it lawful and fit for him to interpose in any case, where the church was interested, and required his care. The neighbouring bishops were intent, but if they neglected, it came before any others, who would fill in it, according to the contents of the two following sections.

II. Letters

letters to that province, and to the people of *Arles*, exhorting them^k to excommunicate *Marcianus*, and to provide a successor for him; that so the flock of Christ, which is scattered thro' his means, and neglected by him in its distress, may once more be gathered together. Let it suffice, that many of our brethren, have, for some years last past, departed this life without the peace of the church: Henceforwards, let such as have survived, such as beg our assistance, and implore the mercies of God in the humblest strains of penitential sorrow, be favourably received, and be restored to communion.

A. D. 254.
Epistle
LXVIII.

2. ^m Therefore, my dearest brother, is our body of bishops so large, and so extended, and cemented together by the bonds of a mutual agreement, that if any of our college should attempt to make himself the author of an heresy, or to divide and waste the flock of Christ; others should step in to its assistance, and, like good and useful shepherds, should gather the sheep of our Lord into his fold. For what if any harbour should prove dangerous to ships, by the ruine of its fences or fortifications; should not the sailors then steer their ships to some other Harbour, where they may enter and ride with safety? Or, if in a journey any inn should be taken up, or beset with robbers, so that no one could get to it without infinite hazard of mischief and destruction; would not travellers, who had once entertained this conceit of it, and found it true, naturally resort to houses of greater safety, where they might be lodged securely, and might trust their persons and goods without danger to the one, or to the other? This, dear brother, we should make our own case, with regard to such of our brethren, as seek a safe harbour in the church, after their escape from the rocks of *Marcianus*; we should receive them with all readiness and humanity, and should let them into such an inn, as that described in the gospel; where they who have been wounded and maltreated by robbers, may be refreshed and taken care of, and be secured by the host from all farther injuries.

§. 2.
That the body of bishops is therefore dissolved so widely, that if any one fall into heresy, others may be at hand to redress the mischief.

Luke 10. 34.
&c.

3. For how can they who are entrusted with the care of the sheep, better discharge the trust reposed in them, than by refreshing and preserving them with all industry and concern? Especially if it be considered what our Lord hath said upon this subject; *The diseased have ye not strengthened; neither have ye healed that which was sick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again, that which was driven away; neither have ye sought that which was lost; and my sheep were scattered because there was no shepherd, and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, and there was none to seek after or to bring them back. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, neither shall they feed them any more; and I will deliver my flock from their mouth, and I will feed them with judgment.* Wherefore since our Lord hath thus threatened such shepherds as neglect his sheep, and thro' whose means they are lost; what is there more incumbent on us, my dear brother, than the use of all diligence in gathering his flock together, and recalling the

§. 3.
That the pastoral care extended to all the sheep, wherever dispersed and distressed.
Ezek. 34. 4; 5, 6.

Y. 10.

Y. 16.

^k To excommunicate.] It should seem therefore that he was not yet excommunicated, but that the bishops of this province were to be reminded of their duty in this particular; and then his flock would be obliged to leave him. Yet the words *Abstinete Marciano* leave some doubt, whether he were already excommunicated, or were now to be so.

^l Departed this life without the peace of the church.] Viz. Under the administration of *Marcianus*, who, siding with *Novatian*, would not grant it to lapsed penitents, even in cases of extreme danger.

^m Therefore is our body of bishops so large.] One absolute monarch and infallible judge, was not then held, by our author, for so good a preventive of heresy and schism, as the body of bishops all together; who had, each, an interest in the whole church, tho' the ordinary exercise of his function was confined to a part of it.

ⁿ With regard to such of our brethren, &c.] i. e. The flock of *Marcianus*, upon due notice from the bishops of their province, and upon their sentence denounced against *Marcianus*, were to separate from their heretical and schismatical bishop; but then in order to this, the bishops of the province were in form to declare it.

A. D. 253.
XIX Epistle.
LXVIII.
MART. 9. 12.

Habak. 2. 5.

Ysaiah 40. 1. 2.
Luk. 12. 1. 2.

strays, and applying to such as are wounded the wholesome medicine of his fatherly mercies? Remembring always the intimation given us by our Lord; *that they which be whole need not a physician, but they which are sick.* For we are many shepherds, yet we have ° but one flock to feed; and we should gather together all the sheep which Christ hath purchased with his blood and passion, and should comfort and cherish them with all possible tenderness and care; not despising them in their extremity and distress, nor suffering others presumptuously to insult them in their grief and sorrow; forasmuch as we find it written, *The man who is proud and insolent; who hath enlarged his desire as hell, shall bring nothing to perfection:* And our Lord, in his gospel, hath blamed and condemned the men of this character, saying; *Rejoice they who justify your selves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.* He calleth, we see, those men execrable and abominable, who please themselves, and thro' pride and presumption, assume to themselves what belongs not to them. Now since *Marcianus* hath proved himself one of this number, by joining with *Novatian*, and by declaring himself an enemy to all mild and favourable measures; let him not pretend to pronounce any sentence, but rather let him receive it; nor let him behave any longer like a person, who is to judge the whole college of bishops; but rather like one who stands judged by them. For we must by all means preserve the honour of those blessed martyrs, *Cornelius* and *Lucius*, ° our predecessors; to whose memory since we pay so much deference; much more should you employ all the weight and authority of your see in securing it, who more immediately succeed to the chair they sat in. Now they, when full of the Holy Ghost, and just entering upon the honour of their glorious martyrdom, were of opinion, that peace should be granted to the lapsed; and they signified to us by their letters, that the fruit of penance should not be withheld from them, when they had duly submitted to it; but that they should be restored to the privilege of communion with the church; which determination of theirs was perfectly agreeable to all our sentiments: For indeed we ° could not but think the same thing, who were all acted by one and the same spirit; so that 'tis evident, he holds not the truth of the holy Spirit with the rest of his brethren, whom we find in sentiments different from theirs. I beseech you, therefore, to ° signify to me in plain and explicit terms, who is made bishop of *Arles* in the room of *Marcianus*, that I may know how to direct our brethren, and to whom I am to send letters of communion. My dearest brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

My dearest brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

This is perfectly agreeable to what he had said in §. 4. of the Unity of the church; that the episcopate is single, in which however each bishop holds his part, with the privilege and the duty of being interested in the whole; which the reader may see noted in its proper place.

Do the LXX. The Hebrew, and Chaldee paraphrase read it, *shall not dwell, shall not remain.*

Our predecessors. Our author calls them his own, as well as *Steven's* predecessors, in regard to their having gone off from the episcopate (which was one) before him; but with respect to the particular district, over which they presided, they were only *Steven's* predecessors.

Could not but think the same thing. Whilst the church continued in her primitive purity and simplicity, this blessed *unity*, this unity of sentiments, and conformity of practices, continued with them: Nor would such unity and conformity be now impracticable, were the criminal causes of dissension removed from amongst us; a thing much indeed to be desired, tho' but little in these days of degeneracy and corruption to be expected!

Signify to me. Nor that *Steven* was to be considered as master of this question; but our author's endeavour, in this epistle, was to rouse him from his neglect; and to engage him in a diligent enquiry after this affair; and he being nearer than our author, to the scene of action, had better opportunities of acquainting himself with the true state of the case, and where the right lay. For to him who was canonically elected and ordained, the bishops of the catholic church would be sure to direct their letters of communion, when once they were duly apprized of the fact.

A.D. 254.
Epist. LXIX.

LXXI

EPISTLE LXIX.

In this year the question concerning baptism grew warm among the Africans; and one Magnus (a laic probably from our author's manner of address to him) had enquired, whether Clinics (i. e. persons baptized upon their sick-beds) were to be esteemed as validly baptized, because they were only sprinkled, and not thoroughly washed in those circumstances. He had likewise asked, whether they who came over to the church from the errors of Novatian, were to be baptized, as other hereticks usually were in the African church. For that was plainly the usage with regard to other hereticks, as appears from Tertullian, and from the past determination of Agrippinus upon this affair. The answer to these two queries is contained in this Epistle, which was in all likelihood the first public declaration made by our author of his sentiments thereupon. Novatian was even with him in this management; and because he pretended, that his associates only were members of the true church, therefore he baptized all such as came over to him, which at that time seems to have been the most general and prevailing practice. But for this I refer my reader to my dissertation upon the council of Carthage.

Written after
his return.

CYPRIAN to his son Magnus sendeth greeting.

OUR concern for your religion, hath moved you, my dearest son, to put a question to me, who am but indifferently qualified for answering it; whether, among other hereticks, they also who come over to us from Novatian, should not be baptized and sanctified in the catholick church, with her one only, legitimate and true, baptism, after their receiving his profane lay. Concerning which, as far as I can understand of it, or the tenor of holy scripture seems to me to direct in it, I must tell you plainly, that all hereticks and schismatics whatsoever are utterly destitute of all legal powers. Nor do I really see what pretence there is, or can be, for making any exception in favour of Novatian; or for not esteeming him amongst the enemies of Christ, who continues out of the church, and opposes that peace and love which Christ hath so earnestly recommended to all his followers. For when our Lord Jesus Christ declared, in his gospel, that they who were not with him, were against him; he pointed not to any particular species of heresy; but meant, that all hereticks

§. i.

To his son. This looks as if Magnus were a laic; otherwise our author would have written brother; unless he meant to call Magnus his son in the same sense wherein St. Paul called Timothy his son, viz. in the faith. Bp. Fell.

Among other hereticks. Other hereticks, was plainly then the usage, to receive into the church by baptism; and consequently to annul the baptism they had received out of the church.

For making any exception. The rule was therefore established, either by the decree made under Agrippinus, or else perhaps by the 46th apostolick canon, which directed the bishop or presbyter to be deposed, who should admit or valid the baptism or the sacrifice of hereticks. And the higher we go in our enquiries, the stricter we shall find the ancient fathers were upon this point; as the lower we descend, the rigour of this discipline was looser and more relaxed.

what-

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXIX.
Liber II. 23.

John 2. 18.
19.

Matt. 18. 17.

Song of Solomon 6. 6. v. 5.

Ibid. c. 4. v. 12.

1 Pet. 3. 20, 21.

whatsoever, who were not with him, and gathered not with him, scattered his flock, and were thence his enemies. For thus we read him, saying, *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.* And the blessed apostle St. John, without making any distinction between one heresy and another, or one schism and another, without any greater stress upon this, than upon that sort of them, gave alike to all who forsook the church, and opposed her interests, the name and character of anti-christs; *Ye have heard (saith he) that anti-christ shall come, and even now there are many anti-christs, whereby we know that it is the last time.* ^a *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* From whence it is apparent, that all are enemies of our Lord, and anti-christs, who have departed from the unity and charity of the catholick church. Our Lord hath yet farther laid it down as a rule in the gospel, that, if any man should *neglect to hear the church*, he should be *unto us as an heathen man, and a publican.* Wherefore, if they who neglect to hear the church, are to be held in the same rank with heathens and publicans; much more should they be held as such, who rebel against her, and are her avowed enemies; who erect ^b false altars, and set up an unlawful priesthood, and offer up sacrilegious sacrifices, and coin for themselves ^c fictitious and spurious names; when (I say) sinners in a less degree, who are only represented as persons *neglecting to hear the church*, are, by the sentence of our Lord, adjudged heathens and publicans. Now that the church is one, the Holy Ghost hath declared in the Song of Solomon, saying, ^d *in the person of Christ, My dove, my undefiled is one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her who bare her.* Of whom also he saith elsewhere, *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring sealed up; ^e a well of living water.* Now if the spouse of Christ, which is his church, be ^f a garden enclosed; what is enclosed can never be imagined as lying open to foreigners and profane persons. Again; If it be a spring sealed up; they can neither drink of it, nor ^g receive the impression of that seal, who by standing without have no access to it. Once more; If the well of living water be but one; and that be likewise *within*; whosoever stands *without*, can neither be enlivened nor sanctified by its water, the use of which, and the drinking of it, is the sole privilege of those who are *within*. To the same effect and purpose we find St. Peter likewise representing the church as one, and that they only were capable of baptism who should be within it; *In the ark of Noah few (saith he) that is, eight souls were saved; and baptism in like manner shall*

^a *They went out, &c.* The reader may find our author thus reasoning in 5. 9. of the *Unity of the church*.

^b *False altars.* Nothing more contributed to load heresy with odium and envy, than their erecting altars against altar. The aggravations of which crime, seem to have been taken from the Jews; of whom we read, that when the children of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasse had built them an altar, it was taken by the rest as an act of rebellion against the Lord, and as a virtual rejecting of the place, which the Lord their God was to chuse to put his name there. See Deut. 12. 5. and Josh. 22. 10. 11. &c. Bishop Fell. Now the model of the christian, was formed a good deal upon that of the Jewish church. And every bishop to his own district, was what the high priest was to the whole Jewish people. His altar answered to that at Jerusalem, and the church of his see to the Jewish temple. In this there was a diversity of administration; that the christian church had no such head-pastor over the whole of it, as the Jewish high-priest was. ^c *There the form of its government was aristocratical. But each particular episcopal church, answered to the whole Jewish*

^d *Fictitious and spurious names.* The Novarians called themselves *antiqui*, by way of distinction, *prope stand-off; for I am holier than thou*, seems to have been the motto of their sect; and to this our author here alluded, saith *Pamelinus*.

^e *In the person of Christ.* Observe the interpretation made of this song by the ancient *allegorists*. ^f *A well of living water.* This is not in the sacred text, or in any of the old versions.

^g *Receive the impression of that seal.* From the mention of a spring or a fountain sealed, our author passes to the seal, or the sign, of baptism, viz. the sign of the cross then made upon the forehead of the baptized persons. Concerning which see more note [*defensive sign*] in 1. 16. 1^a book of Testimonies.

save you; at the same time asserting and insisting, that the ark of *Noah* was a type of the one church. If then in that baptism which cleansed and purified the world, any man could be saved by water, who was not in *Noah's* ark; then (and not otherwise) may a man be quickened, by baptism, who is not in the church: to which alone the privilege of baptism is granted. The apostle *St. Paul* hath yet more openly and clearly declared himself upon this subject, in his epistle to the *Ephesians*, saying; *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water*. If then the church, which is thus loved by *Christ*, and cleansed by the washing of his water, be but one; how can he, who is not in the church, either be loved by *Christ*, or be washed and cleansed with his water? Wherefore since the church alone hath the true living water, and the power of baptizing and of cleansing men; he who saith any man can be baptized and sanctified by *Novatian*, first should shew and prove to us, that *Novatian* is a prelate of the church, or indeed so much as in it. For the church (it hath been said) is one; and one, we know, cannot at the same time be within doors, and without.

2. For if this church be with *Novatian*, it was not with *Cornelius*; as, on the other hand, if it was with *Cornelius*, who succeeded bishop *Fabian* by a regular ordination, and upon whom, besides the honour of his priesthood, our Lord was pleased to confer the, farther, honour of martyrdom; then *Novatian* is not in the church; nor can he with any propriety be esteemed a bishop, who, despising the rule of apostolick tradition, and succeeding no body, derives his original from none but himself; nor would he be capable of holding a church, who was not ordained in the church: For that the church is not without doors, that it cannot be divided against it self, but preserves the character of an house at unity within it self, the holy scripture hath declared; where speaking of the mystery of the passover, and of the lamb, which there in represented *Christ*, it saith; *In one house it shall be eaten, nought of it shall ye cast out of the house*. The same thing is likewise intimated to us in the case of *Rahab*, who was a type of the church; and who received *Jerusalem* to bring her father and mother, and all her brethren, and all her family, and her household home unto her; for that whosoever should go out of the door of her house, his blood should be upon his own head. From which mystery we have this plain hint, that all who were to live, and escape the general destruction, should be gathered together into one house only, which is the church: And whosoever, of the persons so gathered, should go forth out of the house, whether having once obtained mercy in the church; should leave it, and go forth from it, his blood should be upon his own head; i. e. he must charge upon himself his own destruction; which the apostle *St. Paul* hath yet more explicitly declared, where he advised *Titus* to avoid a man who is an heretic, as being perverse, and a sinner, and condemned of himself. And indeed he may truly be said to have brought upon himself his own destruction, who not being cast out of the church by his bishop, but forsaking it of his own accord, stands self-condemned thro his own heretical presumption. Thus

How can he? Whether this reasoning of our author be just and accurate, is not very material to us, since it is his conclusion which we are concerned for, howsoever it comes at it, and not his premisescation. His testimony to facts, and not his logic; for which we value him. [Succeeding no body.] The importance of this I deferred the cautious and impartial thoughts of all, who, without their own fault, are destitute of this succession, which our author made the genuine and essential mark of a true church. One bishop and one church, is his known aphorism. He who was first regularly ordained the bishop of any church, was the principle of unity to all its members; and whoever separated any of them from him, murthered the schismatic; so long as he contracted no notorious incapacity for the exercise of his function. See note [apostles, i. e. under bishops] in §. 2. ep. [and note [have found consenting] in §. 2. ep. 5. 1. See likewise note [forsaking their proper bishop] in §. 3. of this epistle. What we contend for here is; That all known heretics in this succession were ever censured as schismatics; as to any sect or possible branches in it, they can no otherwise affect it, than the *Unitarian* might, or did affect the *Arian* priesthood; which, yet, we are sure, had a rule appointed for it by express institution.

A. D. 250. *John 10. 30.*
 §. 16. Our Lord hath hinted to us the unity which God would have prevailing in his church: *I (saith he) and my Father are one*; to which accommodating the unity of his church, he hath added, *There shall be one fold, and one shepherd*. Now if there be but one fold, how can he be reckoned as one of it, who is not in it? Or how can he be esteemed a shepherd, who (whilst the true shepherd continues governor of this flock, having received his authority in the church of God by a regular course of Succession) himself, succeeding no body, and deriving his original from none but himself, is clearly a foreigner, and a profane intruder; and as such, an enemy to the peace which our Lord would have preserved, and to the unity which God would have maintained in his church; not dwelling in the house, *as in the church of God, in which none can dwell who are not of one mind*? Whereas the Holy Ghost hath declared in the book of *Psalms*, *That it is God who maketh men to be of one mind in an house*. Finally, the sacrifices which we offer to our Lord, do farther represent to us the strictness and closeness of our christian unity. For when our Lord calleth bread his body, which bread is made up of divers grains of corn united to each other, he typifies to us his people (whose image was therein represented) as united to each other: So likewise, when he calleth wine his blood, which wine consists of the juice of divers grapes and clusters squeezed thence, and incorporated into one body, he hints to us the sheep of our flock, united in a mixed multitude together. Wherefore if Novatian be united to this bread of our Lord, or mixed with this cup of Christ; then indeed, and not otherwise, he may appear capable of the grace of the one baptism; if, I say, it shall appear, that he holds the unity of the church.

§. 3. Finally, how indissoluble the bonds of this unity are, how hopeless their cure, and what irretrievable ruine they derive upon themselves from the wrath of God, who are the authors of schism, and who, forsaking their proper bishop, set up for themselves a pretended bishop, without the doors of the church, the holy scripture hath sufficiently declared to us, in the books of *Kings*, where we read of the twelve tribes being separated from the tribe of *Juda* and *Benjamin*, and of their forsaking their king, and setting up for themselves another, out of the regular course. *The Lord (we are told) was very angry with all the seed of Israel, and rejected them, and delivered them into the hand of the spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight; Because Israel was rent from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat their king*. Our Lord, we find, was very angry, and gave them up to ruine, for departing from their unity, and for setting up another king. And so great was the displeasure of our Lord against those who made the schism, that when the man of God was sent to *Jeroboam* to reprove him for his sins, and to threaten him with the vengeance which should overtake him for them, he was forbidden so much as to eat bread or to drink water there. And when he broke thro' that prohibition, and was persuaded to take a meal there, against his express orders; the vengeance of God immediately overtook him, and he was slain by a lion.

1 Kings 13. 9.
 §. 24.

[Sacrifices.] This is usually our author's word for the eucharistical oblations of bread and wine.

[Divers grains of corn.] See our author allegorizing in like manner in §. 5. of epistle 63.

[Then indeed.] Our author here argues, that a communion in the sacraments of the church, implied a communion with the Church, and so vice versa.

[And who, forsaking their proper bishop.] Schism, according to our author's notion of it, consisted in forsaking their proper bishop; and yet even then they usually got another ordained for them by persons who themselves received their orders in a regular course of succession from catholic bishops. And therefore, when it was said of *Novatian* that he was self-originated; it was meant of his relation to the see of *Rome*, that he succeeded no body there; since that see was filled by the regular succession of *Dionysius* to it. For otherwise we know that he received his ordination from three *Italian* bishops; and so was not, in respect of his orders, self-originated, but only in respect of his relation to that particular place of his flock.

[Because Israel was rent.] God often makes man's wickedness the instrument of punishing and punishing; and so, tho' he threatened to rend the kingdom out of the hand of *Solomon* (*1 Kings 11. 34*), yet the instruments by which that event was brought to pass, might not be less criminal in revolting from *Rehoboam*.

[Who made the schism.] The division in the state, now attended, we know, with a schism in the Jewish church.

II. TRAIL in

in his return from that journey. And will any one now presume to say, that the saving waters of baptism, and the grace attending them, can be allowed in common to schismatics, with whom a participation was forbidden even in ordinary meat and drink? Our Lord in his gospel hath spoken to this point yet more strongly and clearly, and hath shewn us, that they who had divided themselves from the tribe of *Juda* and *Benjamin*, and had left *Jerusalem* for *Samarita*, were to be numbered amongst aliens and heathens: Since, when he first sent forth his disciples upon the ministry of reconciliation, he gave them the following orders, to this effect; *Go not (said he) into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not*: Designing to send them first to the *Jews*, he directed the *Gentiles* at that time to be past by; and added, that the city of the *Samaritans* should likewise be omitted, they being schismatics, by which he plainly intimated, that the case of schismatics was upon the level with that of heathens.

A. D. 255,
Epist. LXIX.

Mat. 10. 5.

If any one now should object and say, that *Novatian* holdeth the same rule with the catholic church, and baptizeth from the same creed which we do; acknowledgeth the same God the Father, the same Christ his Son, and the same Holy Ghost; and therefore that he may properly enough have allowed to him the power of baptizing; because, in the baptismal interrogatories, he seemeth not to differ from us: Let the person who thinks this a good objection, be informed, first, that schismatics and we do not really observe one and the same rule in our creeds, nor the same baptismal interrogatories; for when they say, *Doth thou believe remission of sins, and everlasting life by the holy church?* They impose upon us by such an interrogatory; as having really no church amongst them. In the next place, they confess with their own mouths, that there can be no remission of sins but by the holy church; which they not having, must consequently own, that they have no remission of sins amongst them.

§. 4.
Tho' schismatics use the same words of the creed; yet they deny the faith contained in them.

As to what is said of their acknowledging the same God the Father with us, the same Christ his Son, and the same Holy Ghost; this will give them but small assistance: Since *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, acknowledged also the same God with *Moses* and *Aaron*, living under the same law, and the same religion, and worshipping the same true God with them, who alone was the proper object of prayer and adoration: Yet because they transgressed the bounds of their station, in opposition to *Aaron* the Priest (who, thro' the favourable appointment of God, stood regularly entitled to the priesthood) and claimed to themselves the privilege of sacrificing; they soon paid dear for their unlawful attempt, by an immediate punishment lighting on them from heaven; and it appeared that those sacrifices could not be valid, nor profit any one, which were irreligiously and unlawfully offered, in opposition to the rule of God's own appointing. Even the censers, in which incense had been thus unlawfully

§. 5.
That we are taught by the example of *Corah* and his company, how dangerous it is to break the peace of the church, notwithstanding that we deny no article of faith.

The same creed.] Observe here the rehearsal of the creed, and an acknowledgment of it, entering then, as now, into the forms of baptism. See note [whose pomp, &c.] in §. 5. of the *Habit of virgin*.

And therefore.] The force of this objection turns upon the validity of schismatical baptisms, from their being right in the form. (For as to the matter there was no question.) How doth our author answer this? Doth he deny the consequence, or say, that tho' they were right in matter and form, yet the sacrament would be a nullity? No! but he affirms, that they were wrong in the form, or used it equivocally, as not meaning by the church, the true church; and yet acknowledging that remission of sins was not to be had out of it. So that if the administrator had been a member of the church, and had used matter and form aright, upon the force of the principles advanced in this §. I see not but the sacrament must have been valid; since the person of the administrator entered not here into the question. Just so, *Athanasius* argued with the *Arians*, that tho' they named the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and so were right in the words; yet they had a different meaning from the orthodox, and understood not the same Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which the orthodox did. See him quoted in *Disserat. conc. Carth.* Our author here expressly denies that the schismatics used the same creed, or the same baptismal interrogatories with the church, because they meant not the same thing with the church; tho' they did actually use the same words.

Doth thou believe, &c.] Observe here the form of our author's creed, in this article of Remission of sins, and everlasting life, by the holy church? See this farther noted in §. 2. ep. 70.

offered,

A. D. 255.
Epist. lxxix.

Numb. 16. 40.

offered, were put together and melted down, and when thus purified by fire, were turned into broad plates to be fastned to the altar; according to what the holy scripture hath said of them; *To be a memorial to the children of Israel, that no stranger, who is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Corah.* And yet those men* proceeded not quite so far as to make a schism, nor utterly to forsake the church of God, nor to declare open war against his priests; as our present dividers of the church do, who break the peace and unity which Christ hath recommended, set up a chair of their own, presume to invade the episcopacy, and to claim the rights of baptism and oblation. But now with what face can they expect to bring any thing which they do to its proper perfection, or to obtain any thing of God by their unlawful attempts, who are labouring in opposition to him, and claiming to themselves what he hath forbidden them? Wherefore they who would patronize *Novatian*, or any such schismaticks, do in vain contend, that any one can be baptized and sanctified amongst them with a saving baptism, who, 'tis plain, have no authority nor power to baptize. For our farther understanding the severity of God's displeasure against such men's presumption; we may observe, that not only the ringleaders and heads of the factious enterprize, but even those who any way favoured or joined in it, were destined to punishment, unless they separated themselves from the company of such wicked men; our Lord having made proclamation by *Moses*, saying; *Depart from the tents of these hardened men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in their sin.* What our Lord threatned by *Moses* be fully executed; and whoever did not separate himself from *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, immediately suffered for being found in such ill company. By which example we may learn that all are obnoxious both to guilt and punishment, who are so void of all prudence and all religion, as to join with schismaticks in opposition to their true priests and bishops: As the Holy Ghost hath well instructed them by the prophet *Hoshea*, saying; *Their sacrifice shall be as the bread of mourning, all who eat thereof shall be polluted:* Clearly shewing, that the followers shall be joined in punishment with their leaders, if they are partakers with them in their sin.

Numb. 16. 26.

Hos. 9. 4.

S. 6.

That is in vain to think of pleasing God by any usages, which do indeed provoke him.

S. 7.

Our author labours to shew, that they only can give the Holy Spirit who have it themselves.

6. How then can they pretend to obtain favour with God, by practices, against which he hath denounced his vengeance? Or how can such men think they shall sanctify the persons they baptize, who, in avowed opposition to the true bishops of the church, labour to usurp an office, which it is unlawful for them to execute, which is wholly foreign from them, and belongs to them by no manner of right nor title. We are not however surprized at their attempts, which are very suitable to their naughty character. What they do they must defend; nor will they yield the cause, tho' they cannot maintain it; and tho' their conscience tells them they are doing an unlawful action. What raises our astonishment, and at the same time our grief, is this; that christians should be found aiding antichrists; and that men who give up the faith, and betray the church, should be found, within the enclosures of the church, opposing her interests.

7. These men, however otherwise perverse and untractable, yet, agree in acknowledging, that all hereticks and schismaticks are destitute of the Holy Ghost; and therefore may indeed baptize, but cannot impart the Holy Ghost;

*Proceeded you quite so far? Yes. They did not set up altar against altar, they claimed no right to sacrifice exclusive of, but only concurrent with, the right of Aaron. Their charge against him was, that he took too much upon him, in the matter of the priesthood; that the congregation was holy, as well as he; and therefore might offer sacrifices, as he did, tho' still at that *see above*, which God had appointed, Numb. 16. 3. Not from their want of sacerdotal powers, which were validly, tho' not regularly, conveyed to them; but from their leaving the church, in which alone the holy Spirit, and all his heavenly gifts, were to be found. See this cited and noted in epist. 57. 13. c. May indeed baptize. This was just *Augustine's* opinion, afterwards, as it may be seen in the answers given by him to the several suffrages of the council of *Carthage*; and seems to have had some footing among certain members of the *African* church, in our author's time; whom here he sets himself to combat.*

here

here then we join issue with them, and will endeavour to shew, that they who have not the Holy Ghost cannot baptize. For whereas in baptism every one's sins are remitted, our Lord hath shewn us, in his gospel, that sins can be remitted by none but such as have the Holy Ghost. Thus when after his resurrection he was sending forth his disciples, he said unto them; *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them; Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained;* Where he plainly intimates, that none can baptize, nor give the remission of sins, but such only as have the Holy Ghost. Finally, *John*, who was to baptize Christ our Lord, received the Holy Ghost before-hand, when he was yet in his mother's womb; that it might remain ever after an uncontested truth, that none could baptize, but such as should have the Holy Ghost. Wherefore let such as favour, in this point, the pretensions of hereticks or schismatics, plainly resolve us, whether they have the Holy Ghost or not? If they have; why do such as are baptized amongst them receive imposition of hands, when they come over to us, in order to their receiving thence the Holy Ghost; whereas, upon this supposal, it was received before, amongst them, who, if they had it, could doubtless give it? But if all hereticks and schismatics, as being without the pale of the church, are destitute of the Holy Ghost, and have therefore imposition of hands from us, in order to their receiving what they had not among themselves, and so could not give; it is evident then, that there is no remission of sins amongst them, who have not the Holy Ghost. Wherefore I conclude, that, in order to their receiving the remission of their sins, in order to their being sanctified, and so becoming the temples of God, by the rules of the gospel, and by divine appointment; all must be baptized with the baptism of the church, who come over to the church of Christ from enemies and anti-christs.

8. You have moreover, my dearest son, asked my opinion of those, who receive the grace of God in a time of sickness, whether they are properly to be esteemed as christians, because they are not washed, but only sprinkled with the saving water? In which particular I would by no means be understood as taking upon me to judge for others, or to restrain them from the free use of their own judgment, or from acting according to it. But indeed, as far as my slender abilities enable me to conceive of this opinion; I cannot apprehend how the blessings of heaven should descend upon any, maimed and imperfect, nor how they should suffer any diminution or abatement, where, in the reception of them, neither giver nor receiver are at all deficient in their faith. For it is not in the waters of salvation, as in common washings, where you would cleanse your body from dirt and nastiness; and where, in order to it, you must be furnished with bathing vessels, and salt-peter, and other necessary helps, to make you clean; Whereas the washing a believer's breast, and the purifying his

^b *Why do such.* Here our author speaks home to the practice which even the persons most favourable to schismatics insisted on; viz. that they should receive confirmation from the church, and her bishop, when their baptisms were allowed; for that they could no otherwise expect the graces of the Holy Spirit: They had doubtless received confirmation before amongst the schismatics, and imposition of hands, which always attended it; (for schismatics, that they might appear the more like to the church, always followed her most solemn usages;) but then, tho' the members of the church, who were most favourable to these schismatics, allowed the validity of their baptisms; yet they did not allow the validity of their confirmations, which were supposed to carry the gifts of the Spirit with them. For these it was thought necessary that they should resort to the Church, in which alone the Holy Spirit was granted: So that their baptisms were agreed to be utterly unprofitable, whilst they, who received them, continued in their schism, howsoever, in the opinion of some, they were not to be repeated.

^c *Not washed, but sprinkled.* As to the equity of these clinical baptisms, by sprinkling, instead of dipping, and the extent of it to infants in our Northern climates, see note [person sprinkled] in *Dissert. on the Church*.

^d *Bathing vessels, and salt-peter.* This is an allusion to the known customs of bathing, which at that time prevailed.

A. D. 255.
EPIST. LXIX.

mind by faith are two very different things, and performed in two different ways. "In cases of necessity, God will dispense with diverse things, and will confer upon believers, in a more compendious way, all the benefits of his saving sacraments."

§. 5.

He sheweth from the rites of the Levitical law, that sprinkling was sufficient to take away uncleanness.

Ezek. 36. 25,

26.

Numb. 19.

7, 19, 20.

Ibid. 8. 5,

6, 7.

Ibid. 19. 9.

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John 3. 5.

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9. Nor should any one be concerned, that the sick seem only to be sprinkled, or to have water poured upon them, in their baptism; since the holy scripture hath thus declared in the prophet Ezekiel: *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness; and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you; and a new spirit will I put within you.* Thus likewise we read in the book of Numbers: *The man who shall be unclean until the even, shall be purified on the third day, and on the seventh day, and shall be clean. But if he be not purified, he shall be unclean; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel, because the water of sprinkling hath not been sprinkled upon him.* And again in the same book; *The Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them: and thus shalt thou cleanse them; you shall sprinkle water of purifying upon them.* And once more; *The water of sprinkling is a purification.* From all which passages laid together, it is, I think, apparent, that the sprinkling of water hath the same effect with our christian washing; and that when things are thus managed in the church, where the faith of the giver and receiver is entire and unblemish'd, the whole transaction is good and valid; and if there be any defect, it is supplied by the plenitude of the divine power, thro' the faith of the persons concerned therein. As to the nick-name which some have thought fit to fix upon those, who have thus obtained the grace of Christ thro' his saving water, and thro' faith in him, and their calling such persons *clinicks* instead of *christians*; I am at a loss to find out the original of this appellation, or whence they derive it; unless perchance in reading the mysteries revealed by *Hippocrates* or *Soranus*, they have there happened to light on it. The *clinick* I am acquainted with from the gospel, who had been for many years confined to his bed by a paralytical infirmity, was so far from being thence defeated of his miraculous cure, that he was not only raised from his bed thro' the mercies of our Lord, but even enabled to take up his bed, and carry it in full health and strength. Wherefore my opinion, as far as I am able to judge of this matter, is this; that he should be received and acknowledged as a legitimate christian, who hath received the grace of God according to the rule of faith, and to the rights whereunto he be-

comes

Water of sprinkling.] The Hebrew reads it all along, *water of separation*. But our author is true to the LXX. N. B. He seems here to have quoted from his memory, and so to have joined what is said of the priest in verse 7; to verses 19, and 20; and even so he doth not quote them like a person who transcribed from them; but rather like one, who having the general sense of them in his head, ventured to set it down, from his memory only.

The same effect.] Viz. Of purifying and cleansing.
Faith of the giver and receiver.] This was the great point with our author, wherein he differed from the practice of the church, as it was afterwards determin'd. The question with him (supposing *form* and *manner* right) was, whether the administrator were within the church, or not? But the church in after-times did not insist on this, if *manner* and *form* were rightly used, tho' by an heretick or schismatick. She then allowed such baptisms, and received the persons so baptized by confirmation only.

Hippocrates and Soranus.] Hippocrates, the famous physician, is known to every body. As for Soranus, he was one of the same profession in the times of Trajan and Adrian. (Bishop Fell.) Amongst these writers, our author saith, it was likely the word *clinick*, or persons keeping their bed, thro' sickness, might be found. But, it seems, he thought it a novelty in ecclesiastical usage, as applied to this particular case. The canons of the church took however frequent notice of it afterwards; and branded the persons baptized upon their beds with a note of infamy; and suffered them not to be admitted to the order of the clergy. But then it was not because they were only sprinkled, and not washed; but because they delayed their baptism, as many did, so long, that they might go on in a course of sin the more freely; upon the common principle, that baptism would wipe out the whole score of all past offences.

Legitimate christian.] Viz. One without defect, as to the initiatory ordinance.

comes thence entitled. Or, if any one is persuaded, that men, in such circumstances, have really nothing conferred upon them, because they are only sprinkled with baptismal water, and that all which is done for them in that way is without effect, let them then run no farther risks; and therefore if they recover, let them even be baptized. But now if this be a confessed absurdity, and if they, who have already received the baptism of the church, cannot be baptized again; wherefore should they, for themselves, or any one else, be scrupulous, either as to the sufficiency of their faith, or as to the mercies of God, which are consequent thereupon? Do they think the grace of God is indeed conferred upon them, but in a more stinted and narrow measure of the Spirit; sufficient (it may be) to entitle them christians, yet not to equal them with the rest of their brethren? Here then they should be reminded, that the Holy Spirit is not given by measure, but is poured whole and entire into the believers heart. If the morning opens to us all alike, and the sun displays his cheering light over the whole horizon, in equal proportions; how much rather should we be persuaded, that Christ, the true sun and day-star, dispense his light of everlasting life thro' his church, without distinction or partiality? A type of this equality we may observe recorded in the book of *Exodus*, where the manna is represented descending from heaven; and therewith prefiguring to us the nourishment of that bread from heaven, and the food which we should receive from Christ upon his coming into the world. There, without difference of age or sex, each person gathered an omer. From whence it might be inferred by just analogy, that the grace and mercy of Christ, which were to come after, would be equally dispensed to all without distinction of sex; and that his spiritual gifts would be poured upon all the people of God, without any regard to difference of age, and without any respect of persons.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXIX.

Exod. 16. 18.

10. In plain terms; the same spiritual grace which is equally received in baptism by all believers, may be either augmented, or lessened afterwards, by our manner of life and conversation; even as in the gospel the seed of our Lord was sown in equal proportions; but according to the difference of the soil it fell upon, some was quite lost, whilst some again brought an increase of fruit in different measures; from thirty to sixty, or an hundred fold. Thus again, when every one hath a penny assigned to him; wherefore should the equality of the divine distributions be changed and mangled by human constructions? But if any one be staggered at observing, that some of those persons who are thus baptized in their sickness, are afterwards afflicted with unclean spirits; let him be assured, that the malice of the devil hath its power continued, till we come to the water of baptism; but there is disarmed of its sting and poison. A specimen of which we have in King *Pharaoh*, who after a long struggle and obstinate continuance in his tergiversation, was enabled to hold out till

§. 10.
That the grace which is equally given in baptism, may be either increased or diminished, by our own act and deed.
Matt. 13. 3.
Ibid. 20. 2.

Exod. 14. 27.

1. If any one is persuaded.] Our authors words are these: *Aur si aliquis existimat eos nihil consecutos, sed quod aqua salutaris tantum perfusi sunt, sed inanes & vacui sunt, non decipiantur, ut si incommodum languoris evaserint & convalescerint, baptizentur. Si autem baptizari non possunt, qui jam baptismo ecclesiastico sanctificati sunt; cur in fide sua & Domini indulgentia scandalizantur?* Here he argues, I conceive, *ab absurdo*. If they have nothing, (for some MSS. read, *si inanes & vacui sunt*.) let them even be baptized; but it was agreed, that they could not be so baptized, because they had been baptized already: Why then, (he goes on) should they think amiss of themselves, or why should others blacken them? This, I conceive, to have been our author's meaning; tho' it might not be impossible for his words to bear another turn of them; but none, I imagine, so natural, nor so agreeable to the tenour of his argument, and of the whole passage. It might be possible e. g. to render *non decipiantur, ut — baptizentur* — Let them not be so far deceived, as to be baptized. But then the words, *si autem, &c.* which follow, would lose their energy. The persons with whom our author argued, agreed these baptisms to be *valid*, as indeed they agreed the baptisms of hereticks themselves to be. See note [paying to each respect] in §. 10.

2. There is disarmed.] But yet as our author goes on in this §. he may recover his power, and that over persons washed as well as sprinkled, if they forfeit the grace of baptism by sin.

3. Pharaoh.] Our author makes him a type of the devil, and the water of baptism; in the latter of which he presently supports himself by the apostle's example, 1 Cor. 10. 1.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXIX.

1 Cor. 10. 1.

§. 6.

Luke 10. 19.

he came to the water; but there he was finally conquered, and came to a dismal end. Now that the sea was there a type of baptism, the blessed apostle St. Paul hath plainly declared, saying; *Brethren. I would not have you ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed thro' the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.* And then he added, that *all these things were "figures to us."* Thus at this very day, the devil is tormented and^o punished by our exorcists, where^p the voice, indeed, is man's, but the power is God's; and when he professeth to leave the persons he hath possessed, and to let the people of God go; ^q he is often not so good as his word, and practises the old cheat, which Pharaoh practised so long before. But when the persons so possessed come to be sanctified by the saving waters of baptism; then we ought to believe, and to rest assured, that the devil is there quite conquered; and that the man who is then dedicated to God, is absolutely freed from him thro' the divine mercies. For if scorpions and serpents, who are known to have most power in dry places, retain their power, or their poyson, when cast into the water; then and not otherwise, may wicked spirits (who are called scorpions and serpents, and yet we have power given us by our Lord to tread on them) continue in possession of that man's body, which the Holy Spirit, upon its baptism, hath begun to make the place of his abode. And this we find to be true in fact and experience; that when, in extreme necessity, sick persons are baptized, and thereby obtain the grace of God; they are thenceforwards free from that unclean spirit, which before possessed them; and live with good esteem and approbation in the church, and make great and daily proficiency in the grace of God, thro' the increase of their faith. On the other hand; diverse persons, who are baptized in their health, by relapsing into sin, feel the unclean spirit returning on them; so that 'tis apparent the devil is thrown out of every believer at his baptism, thro' the believer's faith; and returns again upon him, when that faith fails him. Some, perhaps, may be so unreasonable, as to think those persons baptized, who are polluted (rather) with profane water among aliens and antichrist's out of the church; and 'tis no wonder, then, that they should apprehend the persons who are baptized in the church stand entitled to a less measure of the divine favour and mercy. To men of this persuasion I have little to say, who are for paying so much respect to heretics, as not to have the question put to them, whether they were washed or sprinkled; whether they received their baptism upon their legs, or upon their beds. And yet these men are for disparaging^r the sufficiency of our faith, and

^b *Figures to us.*] *Typoi*; in the original; and accordingly Tertullian in his book *de Corona Milit.* c. 6. reads it, as our author did after him *figura nostra*; tho' in his 3rd book against Marcion, c. 7. he read it as our translation doth *exempla, examples.* Irenaeus in b. 4. c. 45. reads it, in *figuram nostri.*

^o *Punished by our exorcists.*] See what our author saith of this, and what is noted upon it in §. 4. to Donatus.

^p *The voice.*] *Viz.* the form of words used by these exorcists.

^q *He is often not so good as his word.*] §. 5. He often told the exorcists, as Pharaoh did Moses, that he would let the people go, but did not: These exorcists were to prepare the catechumens for baptism; and at diverse times, our author saith, the devil gave hopes, that he would leave the people he had possessed, when these exorcists adjured him; yet he kept his hold of them still, as long as he could; but at their baptism he was forced to leave them.

^r *If scorpions, &c.*] Thus unclean spirits are represented in Matt. 12. 43. as walking thro' dry places. And the poyson of scorpions was known in Africa to lose its force, when they were cast into the water, and even by the winter's cold. *Pliny* hath reported their poyson most prevalent in the middle of the day, when they are extremely dry and thirsty. b. 11. c. 25. Bp. Fell.

Fact and experience.] Observe how our author, in this argument of unclean spirits, and their exorcism, goes all along upon notoriety of fact, which made the thing indisputable.

^s *Paying so much respect.*] The persons (it hence should seem) who were most scrupulous in this point of sprinkling, had no scruple at all as to the validity of heretical baptisms; but were for admitting them without any questions. And our author here urges them with this inconsistency.

^t *Upon their legs or beds.*] *Utrumque Clinici sunt an Peripatetici,* are our author's words. Whether they be Clinicks or Peripateticks. Peripateticks were a sort of philosophers who received their name from walking about as they philosophised, *ut S. wogawaleri.* So our author indulges here a little banter.

^u *The sufficiency of our faith.*] As not allowing it to be sufficient for the purposes of a valid baptism, derogating

derogating from the dignity and sanctity of the baptism of the church. Thus, ^{A. D. 255.} my dearest son, I have delivered my own opinion to you, and returned such ^{Epist. LXXIX.} an answer to your question, as my slender abilities have enabled me to give it; yet I would not be understood as prescribing to any one, or as hindering any bishop from such a determination upon this point, * as shall seem to himself most reasonable; since each of us must account to our Lord for his own administration; according to what the blessed apostle St. Paul hath written in his epistle to the Romans, saying; *Every one of us shall give an account for himself; let us not therefore judge one another.* ^{Rom. 14. 12,} My dearest son, I heartily ^{13.} wish your welfare, and take my leave of you.

[As shall seem to himself most reasonable.] Here we may observe our author's moderation, and withhold what hath already been remarked at opening the famous council of Carthage: That this question concerning the validity of disputed baptisms, was all along considered as a point of discipline; or, at most, of such doctrine only, in which there was room for a diversity of opinion and practice. Had it concerned the very essence of christianity, each bishop, according to catholic principles, must have been concerned for it, not only within the limits of his own diocese, but all the world over.

[Each of us must account.] This parity of office and administration, in every bishop of the catholic church, with regard to the government of his own district, is the declared opinion of our author upon all occasions. See note *[every bishop hath equal liberty]* at opening the session in council, Carthage.



EPISTLE LXX.

Epistle LXX.

When our author had so openly and avowedly declared against admitting heretical or schismatical baptisms; many came into his opinion, and very few would allow of their validity. This started a controversy first in Numidia, where 18 bishops assembled in council, wrote a letter to our author, and the bishops of his province, to consult them upon the question. This letter is lost; but our present epistle is the answer to it; which the Greek church hath received into her canon of the councils. In it we see, that hereticks and schismaticks were debarred from baptizing; from consecrating the eucharist, or the chrism used at confirmation; and whatever of this kind they should presume to do, was esteemed a nullity. This was the first council held by our author, upon this subject, and it seems to have been held in the autumn of this year. ^{Written after his return.}

CYPRIAN, Liberalis, Caldonius, Junius, Primus, Cæcilius, Polycarpus, Nicomedes, Felix, Marrucius, Successus, Lucilianus, Honoratus, Fortunatus, Victor, Donatus, Lucilius, Herculanus, Pomponius, Demetrius, Quintus, Saturninus, Januarius, Marcus, another Saturninus, another Donatus, Rogatianus, Sedatus, Tertullus, Hortensianus, likewise another Saturninus, and Sattius; to their brethren Januarius, Saturninus, Maximus, Victor, another Victor, Callus, Proculus, Modianus, Cittinus, Gargilius, Eutychiannis, another Gargilius, another Saturninus, Nemesianus, Nampulus, Antonianus, Rogatianus, and Honoratus, send greeting.

A. D. 255.

Epistle LXX.

§. 1.

WE read in our synodical assembly, dearest brethren, the letter you sent us, concerning the case of those who may seem to have been validly baptized amongst hereticks and schismatics, with your question contained in it: whether, when such people come over to the catholick church, which is one only, they ought to be baptized? In answer to which, tho' we perceive that you abide with great constancy by the catholick truth; yet, since you have thought fit to consult us upon it, according to the rules of brotherly correspondence, we give you our opinion, which is no new one; but, was long ago established and observed by our predecessors, in which we are very clear, and entirely concur with you, that no one can be baptized out of the church; since in the church, and in that only, there is one baptism, and thence we find it written; *They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and have hewed out for themselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water.* And again the holy scripture admonisheth us, saying; *Abstain from strange water, and drink not from a fountain of strange water.* Wherefore the water which can wash away the sins of any man, by baptism, should (it self) first be cleansed, and consecrated by the bishop; as our Lord hath intimated to us by the prophet *Ezekiel*, saying; *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.* But now how is it possible for him to cleanse or consecrate the water, who is (himself) unclean, and who hath not the Holy Ghost? Especially since our Lord hath pronounced in the book of *Numbers*; that *whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean.* Or how can the administrator of baptism confer upon another the remission of sins, when he cannot, out of the church, get clear of his own?

Jerem. 2. 13

Prov. 6. 24

Ezek. 36. 25

26.

Numb. 19. 22

§. 2.

That it was clear from the baptismal interrogatories, that remission of sins was no otherwise attainable than by the holy church.

2. And, indeed, the very interrogatory used at baptism, is as clear an evidence of the truth as can be desired. For when we say, *Dost thou believe everlasting*

We give you our opinion. The Greek church makes this the first canon in the famous council of *Carthage*, held the year following, and represents both as held under *Decius*; but in this they were most plainly mistaken, as they usually were in circumstances relating to the affairs of the *Western* church. However, tho' they were wrong in the time, they were right in assigning to such an early monument of the church, a place in their canon.

Abstain from strange water. So the Greek canon, and so our author; but whence they had it is hard to say. The Hebrew, the Chaldean paraphrase, the LXX, and other versions reading it, a *strange woman*.

Should (it self) first be cleansed. Bishop *Fell* hath very pertinently observed upon this, that the consecration of baptismal water by the priest, is no such novelty as some would represent it.

Dost thou believe, &c. This was clearly one uniform and known rule, of questioning the person to be baptized; and shews, that these offices were not left as to their form, to the discretion of the administrator. See note [any needless multiplicity of words] in §. 3. of the Lord's prayer. *Ruffinus* (saith bishop *Fell*) hath observed, that the creed, which is commonly called the apostles, tho' it had a place in all churches, yet was a little different in most of them. e. g. The communion of saints was not till late received into it in the *Western* churches. It may here be worth while to insert the most ancient form, which is handed down to us by *Irenaeus*, in b. i. c. i. The church (saith he) which was dispersed throughout all the world, even to the ends of the earth, by the apostles and their disciples; received that faith, which professeth to believe in one God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth; the sea and all things which are therein; and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, who preached by the prophets the dispensations of God; and the coming of our beloved Lord Christ Jesus, his generation from a virgin, his passion, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to heaven in the flesh, and his coming again from heaven in the glory of his Father, to sum up all things, and to raise again from the dead all the flesh of mankind; that so to Christ Jesus, our Lord and God, and Saviour and King, according to the good pleasure of the invisible Father, every knee may bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; Phil. 2. 10, 11. And every tongue may confess unto him, and he may in all things do righteous judgment. By dooming spiritual wickedness, and the angels which transgressed, and turned apostates, together with all impious, ungodly, unrighteous, and blasphemous persons to eternal fire; and by giving life, immortality, and eternal glory, to all just and righteous persons, who keep his commandments, and abide in his love; from the very beginning (of their christian professions) and others by a return to him in the ways of repentance. This *Tertullian* hath summed up more briefly in his book de *Reland*, *Virgin* c. i. The rule (saith he) of faith is one, and unalterable, viz. Of believing in one Almighty God, the maker of the world; and in his Son Jesus Christ, born of the virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised again the third day from the dead, received into heaven; sitting now at the right hand of the Father, from whence he shall come

everlasting life, and remission of sins by the holy church? We plainly imply, that we understand remission of sins to be no where else attainable, save in the church only; and especially, that sins cannot be remitted amongst hereticks, who have no church amongst them. Wherefore they who plead upon this occasion the cause of hereticks, should either change the interrogatory, or else should join with us in asserting the truth couched under it; except they will go so far as to insist, that they whose baptisms they contend for, have allo the church amongst them.

3. It is likewise necessary, that the person baptized should be anointed, in order to his receiving the grace of Christ, and his becoming the anointed of God, by the chrism wherewith he is then anointed. Now it is the eucharist which compleats and finishes, what is begun by the oyl which is consecrated upon the altar; and so the true spiritual unction of baptized persons proceeds from the eucharist; but he who hath neither church nor altar, could never consecrate the creature of oyl: And therefore hereticks cannot have the true spiritual unction, since it is evident, that they can neither consecrate the oyl, nor administer the eucharist. We ought, upon this occasion, to remember, that it is writtan in the book of *Psalms*; *Let not the oyl of a sinner anoint my head*: Of which the Holy Ghost hath therefore forewarned us in the book of *Psalms*, that no wanderer who should happen to stray from the paths of truth, might suffer himself to be anointed amongst hereticks, and the enemies of Christ. Farther yet I would ask, what prayer can a profane priest, who is himself a sinner, offer up for the person whom he hath baptized? Inasmuch as we find it written; *God heareth not a sinner; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth*.

4. Besides; who can give to another, what he hath not himself? Or how should he perfect any spiritual transaction, who, himself, hath lost the Holy Spirit? Wherefore he is to be baptized and renewed, who comes a novice to the church, that he may be sanctified within her pale, by persons who, themselves, are sanctified; remembring that it is written; *Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord*. So that he who hath been misled into an error, and baptized without doors, should consider himself as particularly obliged to wipe out, in the true baptism, the stain and blemish he contracted, when, in coming to God, and seeking a proper priest to initiate him into his service, he fell by mistake into the hands of a prophane one. Finally To acknowledge the validity of heretical and schismatical baptisms, is, in effect and truth, to approve them.

5. For it is at last impossible, that they should be partly valid, and partly null. Whoever could baptize, could give the Holy Ghost; but if he could not give the Holy Ghost, because being out of the church, the Holy Ghost

A. D. 255.
Epistle LXX.

§. 3.
That the same is likewise evident from other rites observed as baptism.

Psal. 141. 5.

John 9. 31.

§. 4.
That no man can give what he hath not himself.

Levit. 19. 2.

§. 5.
That the baptism of hereticks should be held either altogether valid or else a nullity.

come again to judge the quick and the dead, by the resurrection of the flesh. *Per carnis etiam resurrectionem.* The resurrection of the flesh, was necessary to make the dead the objects of his judgment, and therefore even, that should not be wanting.

Now it is in the eucharist.] The words, as they stand in bishop Fell's edition, are these; *Porro autem eucharistia est, unde baptizati unguuntur, oleum in altari consecratum.* Literally thus; The eucharist is that oyl which is consecrated upon the altar from whence the baptized persons are anointed. i. e. As I have given it in my translation; the eucharist compleats all the preceding ceremonies, and confers the true spiritual unction of which the material was but a type. N. B. The persons baptized were immediately confirmed by chrism, and imposition of hands, and afterwards admitted to the eucharist. Erasmus, Pamelius, and Rigaltius, would have it read thus; *Eucharistia unde baptizati unguuntur, & oleum in altari sanctificatur.* But I follow bishop Fell, and take his construction, and therefore need not have recourse to a change of the text; which, how commodious soever, hath no authority from MSS. to support it. If our author be supposed to mean, that the eucharist conferred the spiritual unction, what he mentions of the oyl consecrated upon the altar, must chiefly be referred to that; though it alludes also to the known ceremony of the material unction; neither the one nor the other, he saith, could be validly consecrated; to a man could neither receive the chrism it self, nor the eucharist, which perfected it, amongst hereticks.

creature of oyl.] So *Irenaeus*, b. 4. c. 32. had mentioned the creature of the eucharistical bread and

cup, as again, b. 6. c. 2. had mentioned the creature of the eucharistical bread and cup.

The oyl of a sinner.] So the LXX and vulgar Latin read it, and so our author.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXX.

is not with him; then he^h cannot baptize any person who shall come to him for that purpose; since there is one baptism, and one Holy Spirit, and one church founded by Christ our Lord upon Peter, and thence in its very original represented as the one only. Thus, when every thing amongst that sort of people is vain and insignificant, none of their ministrations ought to be approved by us. For how should any action of theirs be ratified by God, whom our Lord in his gospel hath pronounced his enemies, saying; *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth?* And the blessed apostle St. John, who was so exactly obedient to his Master's orders, hath said in his epistle; *Ye have heard that antichrist shall come, and even now there are many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* From whence we ought to consider, whether it be not a just inference, that they who are pronounced antichrists and enemies of our Lord, cannot confer the grace of Christ. Wherefore we, who hold with our Lord, and abide by his unity, and, through his gracious favour, have a portion of his priesthood committed to our charge, should, by all means, reject the ministrations of his enemies and antichrists, and esteem them as profane actions; and accordingly such as come over to us from their wickedness and error, and acknowledge the true faith of his one church, should be led by us to the solemn profession of that faith and unity, thro' all the ceremonies of the church, as if nothing had before been done for them. We wish you, dearest brethren, all manner of prosperity, and so take our leave of you.

[The adherent to the Cyprianic notion in this particular thought the Holy Ghost given at confirmation; and therefore that the confirmation of persons irregularly baptized, was sufficient.]

[Hence in its very original.] See note [saying to Peter] in §. 3. of the Unity of the Church.

[Thro' all the ceremonies.] Per omnia divina sacra sacramenta: i. e. They were not to be admitted without the sacrament of baptism, by the eucharist, penance, or confirmation only. The word sacramentum in our author, and other ecclesiastical writers, hath already been observed to take a great compass and latitude with it; and therefore no inference from it can be drawn in favour of seven proper sacraments, which will not as strongly conclude for seven and twenty.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXXI.

EPISTLE LXXI.

The former epistle did not so far determine the doubts in Africa, concerning the case of heretical and schismatical baptisms, but that the notion of one only baptism, together with a custom prevailing in some churches on the other side of the question, left diverse bishops in a state of uncertainty, how to behave upon this occasion. Lucian, a presbyter, had accordingly signified to our author, that one Quintus, a bishop of Mauritania, desired to know his sentiments upon it; which he gave him in this letter; answering at the same time the two objections from custom, and the one baptism; and sending therewith a copy of the former letter to the Numidian bishops, that those of Mauritania might have the sense of it in the words of our author and his colleagues. This was done towards the latter end of this year. Written after his return.

CYPRIAN to his brother Quintus sendeth greeting.

LUCIAN, one of our fellow-presbyters, hath signified your desires to me, my dearest brother, that I would give you my sentiments upon the case of persons, who seem to have been baptized by hereticks, or schismaticks. In answer to which, I have sent you a copy of our synodical epistle, lately written upon that occasion; from whence you will easily gather the sense of our brethren the bishops, and of the presbyters assembled with them. For I cannot imagine upon what principles some of our colleagues build their notion, that such persons, as have been dipped by hereticks, should not be baptized, when they come over to us: They say, I know, and give it as their reason, that there is one only baptism; but then certainly that one must be in the catholick church: For if that church be one, there can be no baptism out of her: If therefore there cannot be two baptisms; it must be allowed, that hereticks, who truly baptize, have amongst them the one baptism. Now he, who makes such an advance, and yields so much to them, is certainly concurring with them; and grants (as far as in him lies) to the enemies and adversaries of Christ, the power to wash, and cleanse, and sanctify, the man who comes to them. Now we say, that they, who come over from that side to us, are not re-baptized, but baptized by us. For they can receive nothing there, where there really is nothing; but they come over to us, that they may receive here what they want, where all grace and truth are lodged; because grace and truth are one. There are indeed some of our colleagues, who chuse rather to ascribe this honour to hereticks, than to concur with our sentiments; and whilst they refuse to baptize such as come over to them, under the pretence,

§. 1.

^a Brother Quintus.] In the next epistle we have mention of this, and withal we may observe our author calling this Quintus his colleague, and saying, that he was a bishop of Mauritania. *Rigaltius.*

^b Seem to have been baptized.] He would not acknowledge them to have been truly, or validly, baptized.

^c And of the presbyters.] So that they were concurring with their bishops; and their sense was taken in the late synodical determination; tho' it doth not appear from the inscription of the epistle, or otherwise, that they had any share in the authoritative part of it.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXXI.

that they abide by one baptism; they either make ^d in effect two baptisms, by allowing the baptism of hereticks to be one; or else (which is worse) they are for preferring the profane and filthy wash of hereticks, before the only true, and legitimate baptism of the catholick church; whereas they consider not that it is written, *He that is washed^e by a dead person, what availeth his washing?* Now it is evident, that they, who are not in the church of Christ, are reckoned among dead persons; and that no man can receive life from one, who hath it not; inasmuch as there is one church, which alone hath obtained the grace of everlasting life, and liveth, her self, for ever, and quickneth the people of God.

§. 2.
An answer to
the argument
drawn from
custom.

2. They pretend, indeed, that herein they follow the most ancient custom; since upon the first appearance of heresy and schism amongst the ancients, they, who had received their baptism amongst our people, and afterwards left the church, and fixed themselves elsewhere, were not obliged to receive their baptism again upon their return to the church, but only came in by penance. Now this is no more, nor other, than what we still observe, with regard to those persons who appear to have been baptized amongst us, and afterwards go over to heresy: If such ever come to a sense of their sin, and discard their error, and return to that fountain of truth which they have forsaken; we hold it sufficient to lay hands upon them, in order to their penance; and so, as they have formerly been his sheep, the shepherd is allowed to receive them into his fold, under the notion of strays and wanderers, which for a time have been driven off from him. But now if the person coming over from heresy, was not originally baptized in the church, but is quite a stranger and a foreigner, when he comes to her; he must be baptized, to make him a sheep of her pasture, because there is but one water, and that in the holy church, which can make him so. Wherefore, since there can be no common fellowship between truth and falsehood, light and darkness, death and immortality, Christ and antichrist; we ought in all points to abide by the unity of the catholick church, and in no one article to give way to the enemies of the faith and truth. Nor at last can a prescription be formed on custom, where the case is to be debated by the reason of things, and to turn upon it. For even St. Peter, tho' appointed by our Lord^f to be the first of his apostles, upon whom he built his church, yet, when St. Paul afterwards disputed with him upon the case of circumcision, made for himself no insolent nor haughty claims, pretended not to the primacy, nor insisted upon any obedience, as due to him from such as came into the church^g after him: Nor did he despise St. Paul, for having been formerly a persecutor of the church; but was content to receive good council from him, and to give into those measures which St. Paul had so much reason to insist upon; in which he hath left behind him an excellent pattern of meek-

^d In effect two baptisms.] Vix. the heretical and the catholick, which our author asserted could not be the same; but Augustin, after him, contended, that the baptism was the same (viz. Christ's) wheresoever, or by whomsoever, administered.

^e By a dead person.] It hath already been noted in *supra* 27. of the Council of Carthage, that the words of this text, which founded at first hearing for our author's purpose, were cited very differently from their writer's meaning. Rigaltius hath well enough conjectured, that the words were become proverbial, and were insisted on by the earliest christians, as conclusive against heathen lustrations, performed by the priests of dead men canonized: that they grew thence into common use, and were adapted to any purposes, where insignificant washings were designed to be ridiculed. So that any mention of them, tho' not in their full extent (as here, where the words, *if he touch the dead again*, are omitted) served to apprise the hearer or reader of them, of the insignificance of that washing, which was proverbially meant by them.

^f To be the first.] First in order and precedency, tho' not in time, nor yet in authority and power. In point of time his brother Andrew was plainly before him, *John* 1. 40, 41. and as to the point of authority and power, see the note so often referred to [*saying unto Peter*] in §. 3. of the unity of the church.

^g After him.] As St. Paul most plainly did; yet whatsoever privilege might belong to St. Peter, in virtue of his precedency, St. Paul, the last of the apostles, withstood him to the face, when he deviated from that truth, in the case of circumcision.

ness and unanimity for us also; that we should not be too fond of our own opinions; but, if any thing be well and wisely ordered by our brethren and colleagues, we should embrace it as readily as if it had proceeded from our own direction. *St. Paul*, with great foresight, hath laid down a rule for us very applicable to cases of this kind, where the peace and harmony of the church are concerned; and accordingly we read him in his epistle thus advising; *Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the others judge. And if any thing be revealed to another who sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.* In which words he hath hinted to us, that diverse things may be revealed^h to particular persons for the better; that therefore no man should contend with obstinacy for any persuasion he had before maintained; but upon the proposal of better and more useful measures, he should cheerfully give into them. For we are not to consider our selves as *conquered*, when new and better councils are suggested to us, but rather as *instructed* only; especially when the unity of the church is concerned in them, and when they tend to the firmer establishment of our faith and hope; by informing us clearly, the priests of God, who, thro' his favour are appointed to preside over his church, that remission of sins can no where else be granted, and that the enemies of Christ can have no sort of claim to any dispensation of his grace. This was solemnly determined by *Agrippinus*, of happy memory, and by his brethren the bishops, who at that time governed the church of our Lord in theⁱ provinces of *Africa* and *Numidia*; whose opinion, so conformable to truth, so conducive to the interests of the faith, and of the catholick church, and in all respects so just and well founded, we have likewise thought fit to follow. And that you might know what I had written upon this subject, I have ordered a copy of the letter I wrote upon it, to be transmitted to you, for the farther satisfaction of your self, and our brethren the bishops, with you; agreeable to that common affection which we ought to entertain for one another. My dearest brother, I bid you heartily farewell.

^h To particular persons for the better.] So that it was no disparagement to the former's knowledge (whether natural or supernatural) if in process of time a better order was established. The former prophet might still maintain his character, tho' the latter's advice was preferable. See note [for the improvement of the church] in epist. 73. 5. 7.

ⁱ Provinces of Africa and Numidia.] It should seem hence, that the bishops of *Mauritania* were not present at the council held by *Agrippinus* upon this occasion; tho' the bishops of *Mauritania* were, as much subject to the see of *Carthage*, as those of *Africa* or *Numidia*; e. g. the bishop of *Carthage* summoned and presided in any common synod consisting of those bishops; he summoned assemblies for choosing bishops to such churches as wanted them, and did other things appertaining to the external reglement and order of the whole body. Bp. Fell.



A. D. 256.
Epist. LXXII.

EPISTLE LXXII.

Written after
his return.

When our author saw, that neither the synodical determination contained in ep. 70; nor the custom which had obtained, at lowest from the time of Agrippinus, could prevail to silence this controversy about the baptism of hereticks and schismatics; but that a contrary custom was pleaded, and the authority of the former council, consisting only of bishops in the proconsular Africa, was not sufficient to end the dispute; he wrote his treatise concerning the ^a advantages of patience, as hath been noted in its proper place; and summoned a synod, consisting of African and Numidian bishops, to the number of 71, to go over this matter afresh. This our right reverend annalist apprehends to have been held before the ordinary synod at Easter; because this synod is said to have been convened upon an extraordinary occasion. In it two things principally were determined; 1. The decree of the former synod was confirmed, respecting the baptism of hereticks, &c. 2. It was determined, that all such clergymen, as had either received their orders from the church, or from hereticks, should, upon their return from heresy to the church, be admitted only to lay-communion. An account of these transactions was sent by the synod to Pope Steven in this letter, agreeably to those rules of brotherly correspondence, which then obtained amongst the several bishops of the catholick church.

CYPRIAN, and the rest, to their brother Steven send greeting.

§. 1.

FOR regulating and settling diverse affairs of moment, with a common concert, we found it necessary, dearest brother, to hold a synod, consisting of several bishops, who met together at it. Here many things were propounded and transacted; but the principal point upon which we thought it proper to write to you, and to ^b lay it before your wisdom and gravity, is that, which we apprehend the sacerdotal authority, as well as the unity and honour of the catholick church, (derived to us from heaven,) to be much concerned in; viz. That they who have been dipped out of the church, and defiled amongst hereticks and schismatics with the pollution of impure water, when they return to us and to the church, which is but one, should be baptized; inasmuch as we judged imposition of hands, in order to their receiving the Holy Ghost, not sufficient for their case, except the baptism of the church were likewise conferred upon them. For then we may safely conclude, that they are thoroughly sanctified, if they derive their spiritual birth from ^c both sacraments: Since it is written; *Except a man be born of water and of the spi-*

John 3. 5.

^a Advantages of patience.] See our author expressly affirming the occasion whereupon he wrote that tract, in §. 14. ep. 73. just at the end.

^b Lay it before your wisdom.] They appealed not to his infallibility, as *Pamelius* would hence infer; but laid it before his wisdom, as one bishop usually did by another, tho' perfectly equal, according to the known rules of brotherly correspondence. The word is *conferendum*; they would advise with, confer with, him upon it. So far the complement went; but it is plain they determined the case, before they knew his opinion; and only notified to him what they had done, expecting from his wisdom that he would do the like.

^c Both sacraments.] Their admission to the eucharist, upon their return to the church, was agreed; but this synod insisted upon their being baptized also.

rit,

rit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. We find moreover the same rule observed by the apostles, with all fidelity and exactness; insomuch that when the Holy Ghost had descended upon those Gentiles in the house of *Cornelius*, who, in the height of their noble warmth and ardor, blessed God in diverse languages, thro' his inspiration; yet, the blessed apostle *St. Peter*, remembring well the directions of the gospel, gave orders, notwithstanding, that full, as they were already of the Holy Ghost, they should, however, be baptized: From whence it stands upon record as a lasting precedent, that the apostles in their practice observed to a tittle, the rules and precepts of the gospel. Now that hereticks have no proper baptism; and that no one can be entitled to the grace of Christ by any thing done for him amongst hereticks; we have lately been very exact in deducing, ^d by a letter written upon that subject to *Quintus*, our colleague in *Mauritania*; as well as by another letter, which our colleagues also directed to the bishops of *Numidia*; of both which I have sent you copies.

A. D. 256.
Epist. LXXII.

2. We have added moreover, another decree, dear brother, by our united authority and consent; viz. That if any presbyters or deacons, whether ordained in the catholick church, and afterward revolting from it, or promoted to the clerical order by a profane ordination amongst hereticks and antichrists, and so attempting out of the church to offer sacrilegious and pretended sacrifices; (that these, one and all) should be received, when they return to us, upon the condition of lay-communion only; and should think themselves kindly dealt with, to be admitted upon any terms to peace, after having proved themselves enemies to it; for that they ought not to be trusted upon their return, with those ^e badges of their office, and those marks of honour, which they have used and exercised in their rebellion against the church. And indeed priests and ministers who wait at the altar, and the sacrifices there celebrated, should be without spot or blemish; our Lord God having thus spoken in the book of *Leviticus*; *No man, who hath a fault or a blemish on him, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord*: And again he gives out his orders to the same purpose in the book of *Exodus*, saying; *Let the priests, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord forsake them*. And again; *When they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place, they shall have no iniquity upon them, lest they dye*. But now what greater crime or blemish can any one have upon him, than the guilt of having been in arms against Christ? Of having scattered the Church, which he built, and purchased with his blood? Of having flighted that peace and love, which the gospel hath so powerfully recommended, and continued in a state of discord and war with the people of God, who have one heart and mind? Tho' these men should (themselves) return to the church; yet they cannot restore, nor bring back with them, those whom they have seduced; and who, being prevented by death whilst they were out of the church, have left the world deprived of her peace and communion; whose souls at the day of judgment will be required at these mens hands, as the authors of their destruction, and the leaders of them into ruin. It is enough for such men to have the pardon of the church upon their return to her. But certainly in the ^f household of faith, treachery should

§. 2.
That the clergy, who had revolted from the church to heresy, were to be received only to lay-communion.

Levit. 21. 21.

Exod. 19. 22.

Ibid. 28. 43.

^d By a Letter, &c.] The letters here referred to, are the two preceding; No. 70, and 71.

^e Badges of their office and those insigne of honour.] *Ordinationis et honoris arma*: He would say, they should not be again entrusted by the church with those arms, (those powers to hurt,) which they had heretofore employed against her. The apostle, *Rom. 13. 12.* mentions the armor of light; *Arma lucis*.

^f Lest the Lord forsake them.] *Ἀναμάρτυ ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*. So the LXX.

^g Household of faith, treachery.] *In domo fidei, perfidia*. *Perfidia* is usually our author's word for the guilt of hereticks and schismatics; they having broken the trust reposed in them by the church, when they were admitted to be her members. See note [betrayers of their trust] in §. 11. of the *Unity of the Church*.

A. D. 255.
Epist. LXXII.

have no higher nor farther promotion. For what, I beseech you, do we leave to men, whose innocence hath always been untainted, and who have never departed from the church; if we advance those to her honours, who have forsaken and been in arms against her? These our sentiments we have thought fit^b to lay before you, dearest brother, agreeably to that mutual affection and respect which we owe one another; hoping and believing, that these determinations being so agreeable to the rules of our faith and religion, will be no less agreeable to a person so devoted as you are to both their interests. We are aware, however, that some are so addicted to the opinions they have once imbibed, that they will not easily change them; and yet tho' they are for abiding by the usages to which they have been peculiarly accustomed; they keep up still^c their good agreement and correspondence with their colleagues. And in this point we are perfectly of their opinion, to obtrude nothing upon any one, nor to prescribe any law; since every bishop, in the government of the church committed to him, ^d hath discretionary powers, and is accountable to God only for the use of them. We heartily wish your welfare, dearest brother, and so take leave of you.

^b To lay before you.] See note [lay is before your wisdom] in §. 1. All here runs in the same strain of brotherly correspondence.

^c Their good agreement.] This yet farther sheweth, that however the several bishops of the christian church might disagree upon their particular management of this debated question; yet all, but the angry *Steven*, looked upon it as a point which they might safely enough disagree in, as being a point of discipline, rather than of doctrine. And our author most plainly agrees with them in this their moderation, tho' he was for managing the point of discipline in a different manner from them.

^d Hath discretionary powers.] This, considering our author's principles, as to the great depositum of doctrine, is next to demonstration; that he accounted the case of admitting, or refusing heretical, or schismatical baptisms, to be only a point of discipline. And accordingly from those words of our author at the opening the session of the famous *Carthaginian* council; *Neminem judicantes*, &c. *Augustin* infers thus; *Non solum ergo mihi salvo jure communionis adhuc verum quæro, sed etiam diversa sentire concedit*. De baptis. contr. Donat. l. 3. c. 3. And there is this clear inference from that concession of our author's; that if any stranger had come to *Carthage* from a church which held the validity of these heretical baptisms, and if that stranger had received his baptism amongst hereticks, and been afterwards reconciled to his own church, and thence entitled to its communion; he must likewise have been entitled to communion at *Carthage*, without a repetition of his baptism; because such were the rules of communion between the several districts of the catholic church; that he who was entitled to communion in any one of them, was entitled to it in all.



EPISTLE

PART II.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.

EPISTLE LXXIII.

Jubaianus, one of our author's African colleagues, had written to him upon the foregoing subject; and withal had sent him the copy of a letter written against our author's and his first synod's decrees upon the case of heretical and schismatical baptisms; but both these letters are lost. Pamelius, indeed, conjectures, that pope Steven's letter to our author, was that which Jubaianus referred to, and which came into the hands of Jubaianus, before it came into our author's. But this is very improbable, because Steven wrote not his letter, till the synod, held in the spring of this year, had written to him; and yet either whilst that synod was sitting, or immediately after, our author mentions the receipt of Jubaianus's letter: So that pope Steven could not have written his animadversions so soon. It appears, besides, that the topicks upon which Jubaianus and Steven proceeded, were very different; so that they do not seem to have had any communication with each other. Let this, however, be determined as it will; our author answers, at large, in our present epistle, both to the letter of Jubaianus, and to the objections of the (uncertain) author, therewith transmitted to him. And Jubaianus was so candid as to return an immediate answer to St. Cyprian, thanking him for this letter, and acknowledging his acquiescence in it. This last letter of Jubaianus is lost; but it is referred to in the opening of the famous council of Carthage, held in the autumn of this year.

CYPRIAN to his brother Jubaianus, tenderly greeting.

Have received your letter, my dearest brother, wherein you desire to know my opinion concerning the baptism of hereticks; who being without the pale of the church, claim for themselves a privilege not at all belonging to them, which we can by no means allow to them, nor accept, since, as used amongst them, 'tis apparently unlawful. Now having given my own thoughts upon this subject in writing, I have sent you a copy of our synodical decree upon it, when diverse of us were met together; as also of the answer I wrote to the queries of our colleague, *Quintus*, upon this occasion. And now in an assembly of 71 bishops, of the provinces of *Africa* and *Numidia*, we have confirmed that decree, determining, as before, that there is but one baptism, and that in the catholic church; and so we do not rebaptize, but baptize those with it who

^a To his brother Jubaianus.] *Augustin* in his 2^d book against *Crescentinus*, chap. 33. seems to doubt whether this epistle were our author's, saith *Rigaltius*. But bishop *Fall* replies very justly, that though *Augustin*, in the heat of his dispute, might put the labour of the proof upon his adversary; yet he acknowledged it in his books of baptism, and in those to *Vulturnus*; where, indeed, he would fain insinuate, that all St. Cyprian's letters, concerning baptism, had been either forged, or interpolated: But herein we must make due allowances to the zeal of that good father, for his just cause against the *Donatists*.

^b Unlawful.] *Augustin* agrees the unlawfulness of the hereticks practice, but denies the consequence; he saith, therefore, that for doing an unlawful thing they should be chastized by penance; but the sacraments, which they unlawfully administered, were to be revered, in b. 3. against the *Donatists*, c. 10.

^c Synodical decree.] *Viz.* of the synod first held upon this subject.

come

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.

§. 2.
An answer
to the argu-
ment of the
Novatians
practice.

come over to us. Whoever therefore so come over from ^d a profane and spu-
rious water, are to be cleansed and sanctified, with the true and saving water
of the church.

2. Nor are we in any manner affected with what you intimate in your let-
ter; that the *Novatians* truly rebaptize those, whom they gain from us;
since it is nothing to us, what the practice of enemies to the church may be,
so long as we maintain the honour of our own privilege, and firmly abide by
the truth entrusted with us. For *Novatian*, like apes, which, tho' they are
not men, try to resemble them, would claim to himself the proper privileges
and powers of the catholick church, altho' the church be not with him, nay
altho' he stands in avowed enmity and opposition to the church. He is well
aware, that there is but one baptism; and this he arrogates to himself and his
party, that he may make the world believe the church is with him only,
and so that we all are hereticks. But now we, who are true to our prin-
ciple and foundation of one church, know, and are assured, that nothing is
lawful out of it, and that the original of baptism must come from us, at whose
hands he received his own baptism, whilst he kept within the rules of unity
and truth. Wherefore, if *Novatian* doth really think, that those people,
who have been baptized in the church, are to be baptized again out of it; he
ought to have begun with himself; he should first have been rebaptized in his
own person with an heretical and foreign baptism, who asserts that others,
after they have received their baptism in the church, should afterwards be
baptized out of it, and in opposition to it. But pray how comes it to be a
just consequence, that because *Novatian* is so presumptuous as to do this;
therefore we must *not* do it? Thus, because *Novatian* usurps the honour of
an episcopal chair, will any man say, that we ought therefore to renounce it?
Or, because *Novatian* thinks fit to erect an altar, and to offer sacrifices
thereupon, against all right and reason; should we therefore drop our altar
and sacrifices, for fear of appearing to do as he doth? It is ridiculous and im-
pertinent to argue, that, because *Novatian*, out of the church, claims some
resemblance and likeness to it; therefore we should abandon the truth it self,
which he vain would imitate.

§. 3.
That there
was a pre-
scription in
Africa, for
baptizing he-
reticks, ever
since the time
of Agrippi-
nus.

3. Amongst us it is no new thing, nor without a precedent, that we should
determine for baptizing those who come over from hereticks to the church;
inasmuch as many years, and ^e a long tract of time have passed, since a great
number of bishops, meeting together under *Agrippinus*, of happy memory,
established this rule; and from that time to this, several thousands of hereticks,
who have come over to the church in ^f these provinces, have not declined,
but have most willingly and reasonably follow'd, the practice of obtaining the
grace of baptism, in the quickning and saving waters of the church. Nor is
it difficult for a teacher to lead them into true and proper measures, who, be-
ing once convinced of their heretical pravity, and of the truth which the
church hath in her possession, come over to her, in order to learn, and learn
in order to live. We ought not, however, to confirm hereticks in their in-
sensibility of their danger, by any appearances of consenting with them;

^d A profane and spurious water.] *Augustin* saith in the place just quoted from him, that the water
deserves not those hard names, upon which the name of God is solemnly invoked, tho' by profane ad-
ministrators.

^e A long tract of time.] *Augustin*, *ibid.* c. 12. saith to this; that *Agrippinus* therefore was confessedly
the author of this custom; which yet doth not follow; any more, than it followeth, that because
St. *Cyprian* determined this matter, therefore he was author of it. The apostolick canons give us the
same rule; and yet perhaps the practice was elder than them. *Augustin* saith moreover, that from the
queries of *Jubaianus*, the custom appears to have been various, even since the times of *Agrippinus*,
which is true. Our right reverend editor observes, that *Agrippinus*, in all likelihood, must have lived
before the *Cataphrygian* heresy; i. e. before A. D. 200; else *Augustin* would have been more fond of
charging this practice of baptizing hereticks upon them, than of allowing it to have proceeded from a
catholick bishop, and a catholick council.

^f These provinces.] *Viz.* of Africa and Numidia.

when, of themselves, they are willing to comply with the measures prescribed to them. There is a passage in the epistle, whereof you sent me a copy, which I can by no means pass by; viz. That there need be no enquiry who the administrator was, since the person baptized might receive the forgiveness of his sins, according to his own faith; and especially since I find in the same epistle a mention made of *Marcion*, wherein its author saith, that they, who come over from him, need not be baptized, because they seem already to have been so in the name of Jesus Christ.

4. Wherefore we ought to consider, what is the faith of those, who profess themselves believers out of the church; whether it be likely, that they should obtain grace by means of it. For if hereticks and we have one common faith, then indeed we may both be entitled to the same grace. If, I say, the *Patripassians*, the *Anthropians*, the *Valentinians*, the *Apelletians*, the *Ophites*, the *Marcionites*, and other pestilent heresies, which murder the truth; if these, I say, do confess the same Father, the same Son, the same Holy Ghost, and the same church with us; then, if they have one and the same faith, they may have one and the same baptism with us. And, because it would be tedious to go thro' the detail of each particular heresy, and of their several wild opinions; and it would be unpleasant to recite, what one is out of countenance, and even shock'd, at thinking of; let us for the present consider the single case of *Marcion*, whom the letter, you sent me a copy of, mentions; and let us examine, whether his baptism can, by any rules, be allowed to stand good. For our Lord, after his resurrection, sending forth his disciples, gave them a rule, and taught them how they should baptize, saying; Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Where he intimates to us the Trinity, into the mystery of which the nations were to be baptized. But now doth *Marcion* hold this Trinity? Doth he mean the same Creator and Father with us? Or the same only Son (of this Father) Christ, born of the Virgin *Mary*, which Word was made flesh, who bore our sins, who, by dying, destroyed death, who in his own person first exemplified the re-

§. 4.
That it should
in the first
place be ex-
amined, whe-
ther the form
of baptism
was right.

Matt. 28. 19.

§ *Marcion*.] He meant not the same God with the orthodox, nor the same Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; insisting, that he was not the creator of the world; and he maintained, besides, very odd opinions concerning Jesus Christ and his incarnation, life and death; as if these had been, all, in appearance only.

§ *Patripassians*.] They who so confounded the persons of the Father and Son, as to assert that the Father suffered in the Son.

§ *Anthropians*.] Either they who believed Christ a mere man, or else a spawn of the *Valentinians*.

§ *Valentinians*.] The followers of *Valentinus*, whose *Æones* were so famous.

§ *Apelletians*.] Followers of *Apelles*, a scholar of *Marcion*; who grafted upon his master's heresy.

§ *Ophites*.] They who believed the devil (*Serpis*) that great serpent, was the person conversing with the patriarchs; and accordingly worshipped him, denying Jesus Christ.

§ *If they have one and the same faith*.] It is pretty clear from this, that our author little regarded the person of the administrator in baptism: If they, who had the same faith, might have the same baptism; all seemed to turn upon the unity, or identity of faith, rather than upon the validity of sacerdotal powers. See what hath been represented to the same purpose from *Athanasius*, &c. in *dissertat. Conne. Carthag.* It is indeed (as I have observed in the forementioned *dissertation*) exceedingly probable, that there was no want of episcopal powers even amongst these hereticks; as it is very possible, that our author might hold the opinions, which he did hold, concerning the nullity of heretical baptisms, whether they had those powers, or had them not. The question concerning the validity of an act, done in opposition to the episcopal authority, *quæ episcopalis*, never yet came before any catholick writer; and therefore we cannot be sure what would have been determined upon it. But whatever should have been determined upon it, would, I conceive, have been discretionary, and alterable, according to the exigencies of the church. This general way of arguing here used by our author, sheweth plainly, that the consideration of the person's known faith, who received baptism, was the chief point in view with him. I have heretofore observed of *Tertullian*, that he held the nullity of heretical baptisms without the church; and yet acknowledged the validity of lay-baptisms within it: And so, for ought appearing, might our author too; and from this passage, joined with others of like importance, it is very probable, he did: His main argument here turning upon the form of baptism, and the faith of the person baptized: Now the faith of the person baptized (*Augustin* saith) is of great moment to his own salvation; but of no importance to the validity of the sacrament.

§ *Only Son*.] Some MSS. read it, *God the Son*. Observe here the several articles of the baptismal creed, which *Marcion* denied.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXII.
MXXXI

"surrection of the flesh, and shewed his disciples that he rose again in the same flesh?" Verily the faith of *Marcion*, as well as of the other hereticks who have been mentioned, is of a very different nature in these several articles; and, indeed, there is scarce any thing to be found amongst them, but breach of faith, blasphemy, and strife, which is always an enemy to truth and holiness. Now then can a person baptized amongst them be thought to have obtained the remission of his sins, or the pardon and grace of God, thro' his own faith, who indeed hath no true faith? For if, as some think, a man may receive any thing out of the church, according to his faith; he must, then, have received, according to what he believed; so that if he believes a falsity, he cannot receive the truth; but what he receives must be prophane and spurious, like what he believes. This particular, of a prophane and spurious baptism, is notably touched upon by the prophet *Jeremiah*, saying: *Jerem. 15. 18. Wherefore do they who afflict me prevail against me? My wound is great and grievous, whence shall I be healed? It is become unto me like a deceitful water, which cannot be trusted:* The Holy Spirit hath mentioned *deceitful water which cannot be trusted.* ^p What else, now, can this be, but the water, which puts on a pretended shew of baptism, and abuseth the grace belonging only to true faith, by usurping the symbols and badges of it?

S. 5.
If there be a necessity of confirming hereticks, there is a like necessity of baptizing them.

Matt. 16. 19.
John 20. 21, 22, 23.

But now if any one may be baptized out of the church, and therewith obtain the remission of his sins, according to his erroneous faith; according to the same faith, he might likewise receive the Holy Ghost; and then it would not be necessary to lay hands upon such an one, when he comes over to us, in order to his receiving the Holy Ghost, and being sealed. If his faith could obtain one of these privileges for him out of the church; why could it not obtain them both? But if it could not do both, we may be sure it could do neither. It is clear enough where, and from whom, that remission of sins is to be had, which is conveyed in baptism: For our Lord gave to *St. Peter* first, on whom he built his church, and from whose person the unity of his church took its rise, and was thence represented (to *St. Peter* first, I say, our Lord gave) the privilege, that *Whatsoever he should loose on earth, should be loosed in heaven.* And after his resurrection he said to his apostles; *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* From whence we are instructed clearly, that it is lawful for none to baptize, or to confer the remission of sins, but for bishops only within the church, who are ordained according to the rules of the Gospel, and the will of our Lord; but that out of the church there can be no binding nor loosing, where there is no proper person to bind nor loose.

^p *What else.* Our author here, as the ancients usually did, allegorized a little upon the prophet, and ventured upon a pretty bold deduction from the letter of his prophecy. He followeth here the LXX; but the Hebrew, and all the old versions, except the Arabic, are nearer to our English construction.

¹ *Sealed.* One office of the Holy Ghost is said in scripture to be *sealing us up to the day of redemption*; to which our author here may well be thought alluding, when he saith, *ut Spiritum Sanctum confignatur et signetur.*

² *If it could not do both.* The persons our author argued with, agreed, that hereticks could not give the Holy Ghost; and therefore laid hands on such persons, when they came over to the church, and took its rise, and was thence represented. Not by conveying any distinct power to *Peter*; but by beginning with his single person, our Lord did thence prefigure (according to our author) the unity of his church: For otherwise, we presently read that the same power was afterwards given to all his apostles.

³ *For bishops only.* They were certainly the persons originally entrusted with the dispensation of this ordinance, and none but they, and such as they should authorize, might lawfully undertake it. But what was not originally lawful for others to do, without or against them, they, as it were, did sometimes think fit to confirm, *ex post facto*; and at other times nullified, such acts, as they judged it more or less conducive to the interests of the church, and to the maintenance of order in it.

⁴ *No binding nor loosing.* Here our author most clearly interprets the power of binding and loosing, of the gospel ordinances.

Nor

Nor do we assert this, dear brother, without due warrant from the word of God, viz. that every thing hath a certain rule appointed by him for it; and that no one ought to assume to himself a privilege which doth not belong to him, in opposition to bishops and priests. For when *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram* claimed the privilege of sacrificing, in opposition to *Moses and Aaron*; they paid, we find, dear for their unlawful attempt: And when the sons of *Aaron* put *strange fire* upon God's altar; they were immediately slain before him, thro' his displeasure at their practice. The same punishment waits for those who use *strange water* in their pretended baptisms; and the justice of God will avenge him on such hereticks, as presume, in opposition to the church, to do what it is only lawful for the church to do.

6. As to what is said by some, concerning the case of those who were baptized in *Samarita*, and upon whom we only read that hands were laid, at the arrival of the apostles *Peter* and *John*, but that they were not rebaptized; it is evident, dear brother, that the instance is no way pertinent to the case before us: For the faith of those who were at that time believers in *Samarita*, was sound and true; and they were baptized by *Philip* the deacon, sent thither by those very apostles, within the church, which is one, and is solely entitled to the privilege of dispensing baptismal grace, and with it the remission of sins: And, therefore, having already received the true and proper baptism of the church, it was by no means fit for them to be baptized again; only what was wanting to them was supplied by *Peter* and *John*, who, by prayer and imposition of hands, called down the Holy Ghost upon them. And this is our present practice, with regard to such persons as are baptized in our church; who are brought before her bishops, and so receive the Holy Ghost by our prayer over them, and the imposition of our hands upon them; and thus, at length, are perfected with the seal of our Lord. We have no reason, therefore, dear brother, to yield in this point to hereticks; nor to give up that baptism, which was granted only to the one true church. It is the part of a good soldier to defend his general's camp against the invasion of enemies and rebels: And an officer who is a man of honour, will secure the standard committed to his custody. It is written; *The Lord thy God is a jealous God*. Now we who have received the Spirit of God, should be jealous for his faith. With such a kind of zeal and jealousy *Phinees* pleased God, recommended himself to his favour, and appeased his wrath against the people, who were falling by it in great numbers. Why do we, who hold but one Christ and one church, allow the acts of another, which is spurious, and a foreigner; and an enemy moreover, to the unity prescribed by God? The church, like paradise, takes into her enclosure such trees as bear fruit; and those of them which bear not good fruit, are hewn down and cast into the fire. These trees she waters with four rivers, i. e. with the four gospels.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.

Numb. 16.

Lev. 10. 1, 2.

5. 6.

That they who were baptized by Philip, received the rite of confirmation from the apostles Peter and John. Acts 8. 17.

Deut. 4. 24.

Numb. 25. 8, 11.

Matt. 3. 10.

Use strange water in their pretended baptisms.] *Alienam aquam baptismo inferunt falsa.* Where note the reading of the York MS. *In baptismo offerunt, offer strange water in baptism.* By prayer, and imposition of hands.] The ancients seem to have thought, that the Holy Ghost was not given by baptism only, without the finishing ceremony of confirmation. And this was ever reserved to the bishop, who immediately after baptism, confirmed the persons baptized, by prayer, chrism, and imposition of hands. They who allowed the validity of irregular baptisms, agreed, however, that the persons so baptized, must receive their confirmation from the bishop within the church, in order to their receiving the Holy Ghost. Perfected with the Seal of our Lord.] Viz. Confirmation, which was the seal and earnest of the Spirit conveyed by it. Eusebius, b. 6. c. 25. recites (saith Rigaltius) the substance of pope Cornelius's letter to Fabian, bishop of Antioch, concerning the clinical baptism of Novatus; which was therefore, among other reasons, imperfect; because he was not sealed by the bishop, i. e. confirmed, and so could not receive the Holy Ghost. Standard.] The word is *signa* in our author, which hath an allusion to the seal so often mentioned; but our language hath no word to render it, which will bear that double entendre. Four rivers.] The reader, tis presumed, will easily observe, that the comparison still goes on between paradise and the church: As paradise had its four rivers. Gen. 2. 10. so the church had its four gospels.

by

by which she overflows them, as it were, in her saving baptism, and conveys to them the grace of it. Can any one, who is not within the church, water a person from her fountains? Can he impart to any one the wholeness, refreshing waters of paradise, who is *subverted and self-condemned*; and, being driven from the fountains whence those waters spring, is dried up, and ready to sink under the want of them? Our Lord cries out to such as thirst, and bids them *come to him, and drink of those living waters which flowed out of his belly*. Whither then should he go who is a-thirst? To hereticks, who have no fountain of living water amongst them? Or to the church, which is one, and, by our Lord's express appointment, was founded upon one person, who also had the keys of it given to him? She only is in possession of her spouse's and her Lord's authority; in her we hold that share of prelacy and government which we exercise; for her honour and unity we earnestly contend; we stand up vigorously for the grace which she alone dispenseth; and for the privilege thence belonging to her only. We, thro' the divine permission, water the people of God when they are a-thirst, and guard the avenues of her living fountains. If therefore we are for maintaining the right of which we are in possession, and for abiding by this mystick unity; why do we give any one reason to suspect us of sneaking from the truth, and of giving up this unity? The faithful, saving, and holy water of the church, cannot be adulterated nor corrupted; even as the church her self is ever modest, chaste, and uncorrupted. If hereticks are really in the interest of the church, and settled within her pale; then indeed they may use her baptism, and the rest of her saving ordinances: But if they are not within her pale, and act in opposition to her; how can they baptize any with her baptism? It is no small concession which we make to hereticks, when we acknowledge the validity of their baptism; since our Religion begins with it; it enters us upon the saving hope of eternal life; and the mercies of God, in purifying and quickning his servants, take thence their rise and their commencement. For thus I argue; if any one can have baptism amongst hereticks; then may he likewise obtain remission of sins with it. If then he hath obtained the remission of his sins; we must suppose him sanctified, and become a temple of God: But of what God, I fain would ask? The Creator of all things? But it could not be he, since he believes not in him: Of Christ then? But he cannot become his temple, who denies him to be God: Or, of the Holy Ghost? But, since *John 5. 7. these three are one*; how can the Holy Ghost be at peace with him, who is an enemy either to the Father or the Son?

^b Upon one person.] See note [took its rise, and was thence represented] in §. 5. Our author's known opinion was, that the rest of the apostles were what Peter was; and so what he saith of him by way of eminence, must only be meant to illustrate the unity of the church. (Bishop Fell.) Rigaltius moreover saith, that what our Lord indeed promised to Peter singly upon a special occasion, Matt. 16. 17, 18, 19. he confirmed to the rest, Matt. 18. 18. and performed to them altogether, John 20. 21, 22, 23.

^c Give any one reason to suspect us.] *Cur existimamus?* is bishop Fell's text. But the York MS. with some others, reads it, *existimus*: And some, *existimus*: Either of which seems more proper than *existimamus*.

^d Religion begins with it.] i. e. Baptism is the first act which is performed for us in the christian religion: It enters us upon it.

^e He believes not in him.] Here he refers to the heresy of Marcion, of whom he had before spoken, and who rejected the Creator of the world from being the God of christians. Here (saith Rigaltius) our author sheweth, that he was therefore chiefly for disallowing the baptism of hereticks, because most of them erred in some article of the Trinity. Yet this was not true, with regard to Novatian, who only erred in the article of the church. But whoever had the same faith entirely with the church, seems entitled, by our author's principles, to the allowance of such baptisms as should be celebrated by him. See note [if they have one and the same faith] in §. 4. Yet in this way of calculating, our author must have been, and was indeed, against the allowance of any heretical or schismatical baptisms whatsoever: Because in the article of the church, all schismaticks held a different faith from her.

^f Denies him to be God.] Temples, *quæ* such, belonging to God only; our author argues, that they, who denied Christ to be God, could with no consistency pretend to be his temples.

^g These three are one.] Here again our author expressly quotes that famous passage, which in these days is so much disputed. See it noted in §. 5. of the *Unity of the Church*.

7. In vain do some, when they are beaten from the holds of reason, fly for refuge to custom; ^a as if custom were preferable to truth; or as if, in matters of religion, that were not to be followed, which is revealed from time to time by the Holy Ghost, ⁱ for the improvement of the church. One who errs merely thro' ignorance, may be admitted to terms of pardon: And thus the apostle St. Paul saith of himself; *I, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly.* But now he, who wittingly and willingly persists in his error, after it is discovered to him by any ^{*} inspiration from above, cannot plead ignorance for his pardon; since he goes on obstinately and presumptuously, after he hath been foiled by reason.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.
§. 7.
That it is in vain for them who are baffled in point of reason, to resort to the plea of custom.
1 Tim. i. 13.

8. Nor let any one upon this occasion pretend to say, we follow herein apostolical tradition; forasmuch as the apostles did certainly leave behind them but one church, and one baptism, which was no where to be found but in that same church: Nor do we find one single instance of a person, who had received his baptism from hereticks, afterwards admitted to communion by the apostles in virtue of such a baptism. As to that passage in the apostle St. Paul, which some are here fond of citing, as favourable to the cause of hereticks; *Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, let Christ be preached;* it is very clear to me, that it can do no service to those, who thence would draw consequences in favour of hereticks: For St. Paul was not there speaking of hereticks, or their baptism; nor can it be made to appear, that he meant any thing which had a relation to them: He was mentioning the case of certain brethren, who severally, either walked disorderly, and contrary to the rules of ecclesiastical discipline; or else stuck close to the truths of the gospel, from a sincere principle of fearing God. Some of these, he observed, *spoke the word of our Lord, boldly, and without fear,* whilst others, did it of *envy and strife*; some were constant in their affection and love to him, whilst others proceeded with hatred and contention; but yet, he bore all with patience, so long as either *in pretence, or in truth,* the name of Christ, which he (Paul) preached, came by these means to the knowledge of many; and this early dispersion of the word, whilst as yet the church was unsettled, carried it among numbers, by having so many publishers. Besides; it is one thing for persons within the church to speak of the name of Christ; and another thing for persons out of the church, who stand in avowed opposition to its interests, to baptize in the name of Christ. Wherefore let those, who take upon them the patronage of hereticks, no longer urge us with a passage meant by St. Paul of brethren; but let them produce an instance of the apostle's allowing any act of an here-

§. 8.
That apostolical tradition was improperly urged in this debate.

Philip. i. 18.

1. 14. 15;
16. 17.

^a *As if custom were preferable to truth.* So that our author seems here to give up the point of custom, at least as to some places; and it was doubtless different in different churches.

ⁱ *For the improvement of the church.* In melius revelatum: i. e. The Holy Ghost upon different exigencies and emergencies, moved the members of the church to do what was best for her; and led them to do so by gradual improvements. If ever a custom was altered for the better; it was altered by his suggestion, from whom all good motions originally proceed. And our author seems here to resort to his old plea of revelations, imputing this change of measures to a special ^{*} inspiration from above. The revelations of the Holy Spirit did not alter (in melius) for the better; but whenever human councils suggested any change for the better, it was imputed to the Holy Ghost.

^{*} *Let Christ be preached.* Christus annuncietur. So our author. But in the original, the word is indicative, *Christus annuncietur, is preached.* Chrysostom (saith Rigaltius) observed upon this, that the apostle did not say, what should have been done, did not mean an imperative sense; but only an indicative, as taking notice of what was done. Tertullian indeed against Marcion, b. 5. interpreted the apostle's words in much the same sense with our author. *It is nothing to me, whether in pretence, or in truth, let Christ be preached* — (annuncietur.) Meaning, that he rather chose to have Christ preached in pretence, than not preached at all.

ⁱ *Whilst as yet the church was unsettled.* Nova adhuc & rudis sermonis seminatio loquentium predicatione crebesceret. All men were at liberty in the infancy of the christian church, to publish the glad tidings of the gospel; viz. to notify to all within their reach the state of facts, Christ's birth, life, resurrection, &c. But the doing this, *ex officio*, was soon confined to an order of men; as soon as there was a reglement of matters, and they were brought into any form.

A. D. 256. Ep. LXXIII. pick, or of his asserting, or agreeing, that persons, who had violated their faith, and were blasphemers, might receive, out of the church, the forgiveness of their sins. If we farther consider, what the opinion of the apostles was concerning hereticks, we shall find, in their several epistles, that they abominated and detested all heretical pravity. Thus, for instance, when we find them saying, that *the words, of hereticks, will spread like a canker*; how can the word of any one procure the remission of sins, which steals upon the ears of its hearers like a canker? Or, again, when they observe, that *righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness; and that light hath no communion with darkness*; how, I beseech you, can it be imagined, that darkness should enlighten, or unrighteousness justify any one? Or once more; when they affirm of hereticks, that *they are not of God, but of the spirit of antichrist*; how should they act in things pertaining to God, who are his avowed enemies, and whose hearts are possessed by a spirit of antichrist? Upon the whole then; if we would lay aside the errors arising from the perverseness of human disputations, and would sincerely return into the way of gospel truth, and the real tradition derived from the apostles; we should easily understand, that it is utterly unlawful for them to meddle with any thing belonging to the saving privileges of the church, who oppose and scatter the church of Christ, who by Christ himself are styled his enemies, and, by his apostles, antichrists.

§. 9. Nor is there here any colour for the pretences of such, as urge us upon this occasion, with the name of Christ, in order to subvert his truth; and who tell us, that whoever are any where, in any manner, baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, are entitled to the grace of baptism; since Christ himself hath told us, saying; *Not every one who saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: And again hath forewarned us, not to suffer ourselves to be too easily imposed upon by false Christs and false prophets, who shall come in his name: *Many (saith he) shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many*: And he soon after subjoined; *Beware, behold I have told you every thing before*: From all which it is manifest, that we are not presently to swallow every pretence of persons boasting, that they act in the name of Christ; but we are to regard those things only which are done agreeably to the rule of christian truth. For as to what is intimated both in the gospels, and in the apostolical epistles, concerning the remission of sins by the name of Jesus Christ; none of this was meant exclusive of the Father, much less in opposition to him; as if the Son alone could forgive any one without the Father; but it was designed to apprise the Jews, who boasted of their having the Father, that the Father alone would little avail them, except they believed in his Son, whom he had sent. For they who knew God the Father, the creator, ought also to have known Christ, his Son; and not to have contented and pleased themselves with knowing the Father alone, without the Son, who hath said; *No man cometh unto the Father but by me*. And, that the knowledge of both is necessary to salvation, he hath elsewhere declared, saying; *This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*. Wherefore, since Christ himself hath asserted and published to the world, that the Father is first to be acknowledged, who sent; and, in the next place, Christ himself, who was sent by him; and that there can be no hope of salvation without an acknowledgement of both together; how can it be thought

^m *Whoever are any where, &c.*] These seem to have been assertions contained in the letter sent by Iubaianus to our author, against his opinion and practice in this case of baptism.
ⁿ *Act in the name of Christ.*] Rigaltius observes upon this, that, as all hereticks spring originally from the church, they all assumed the name of Christ; but the rule of truth was, not the name which any thought fit to give themselves, but the gospel of Christ.

that any persons who are baptized amongst hereticks, in the name of Christ, A. D. 256. Ep. LXXIII. not only without acknowledging, but even blaspheming God the Father, do therewith obtain the remission of their sins? The case of the Jews, in the times of the apostles, and under their management, was very different from that of the Gentiles now. The former, having already received the old baptism of Moses and the law, were after that to be baptized, moreover, in the name of Jesus Christ; even as we read in the Acts of the apostles St. Peter, advising them, saying; *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Acts 2. 38. St. Peter mentioneth Jesus Christ, not with any design that the Father should be omitted, but that the Son should be added to him [*who was before acknowledged.*] In fine; when the apostles were sent forth by our Lord, to the Gentiles, after his resurrection, they were commanded to baptize them in the name of the Father, Matt. 28. 19. and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. With what face or reason can any one after this affirm, that a Gentile baptized any where, after any manner, out of the church, and in opposition to her, so he were but baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, may obtain the remission of his sins? When yet Christ himself commanded the Gentiles to be baptized in the name of the whole Trinity together! Unless any man will be so absurd as to say, that tho' he, who denieth Christ, shall, indeed, be denied by Christ; yet, that he who denieth his Father, whom Christ himself confessed, shall not be denied by him; and that the man who blasphemeth him, whom Christ acknowledged as his Lord and God; shall receive from Christ, by way of recompence, the remission of his sins, and baptismal sanctification! Matt. 10. 33. But by whose, I beseech you, or by what authority, can a person obtain the remission of his sins, who denieth God the creator of the world to be the Father of Christ? Since Christ himself received the power, in virtue whereof we are baptized, and the sanctification attending it, from that same Father; whom he acknowledged greater than himself; of whom he desired to be glorified; whose good pleasure he fulfilled, and carried on his obedience, even to the drinking of his cup, and suffering death! What is it, therefore, besides than a participation with hereticks in their blasphemy, to assert and maintain, that any one may receive the remission of his sins in the name of Christ, who blasphemes, and grievously therewith offends the Father, who is the Lord and God of Christ? Then, again, how inconsistent is it, that he who denieth the Son, should be agreed not to have the Father; and yet, that he who denieth the Father, should be believed to have the Son? Whereas the Son hath born testimony, saying; *No man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father.* John 2. 23. So that there seems to have been a design of thence convincing us, that the Son had received no authority for the remission of sins in baptism, which his Father did not give him; especially, since he hath

[1] Blaspheming God.] As Marcion did (which was the instance more particularly before our author) by denying the creator of the world to be the Father of Jesus Christ.

[2] Who was before acknowledged.] These words I have ventured to add, as explanations to our author's meaning.

[3] A Gentile baptized.] The stress lies upon the word *Gentile*. For a Jew might (as in that instance of Acts 2. 38.) be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, because he had before been baptized into the religion of Moses, which acknowledged God the Father; and therefore the Lord Jesus was the principal point to be insisted on with such a person. But Gentiles were equally strangers both to Father and Son, and therefore must expressly recognise them both in their baptism. Thus far this argument.—That from the institution goes farther yet, and concludes for the acknowledgment of all three persons, and of the whole Trinity together. *Plena et adunata Trinitate*, as our author soon subjoyneth.

[4] Denieth God the creator, &c.] So Tertullian against Marcion, b. 2. c. 2. charges him as introducing two Gods, and denying the creator.

[5] Drinking of his cup.] Thus our Saviour himself hath entitled his death and passion, in his reply to the sons of Zebedee. *Matt. 20. 22.*

A.D. 256. again repeated it; *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* But if the disciples of Christ will not learn from Christ the just measures of reverence, which are due to his Father's name; let them take it from facts and instances of this world; and let them at the same time remember, that Christ hath left it upon them as a severe sarcasm. *The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.* Is then an affront be offered to any one's father; if his honour be insulted, or his good name injured; the son will presently fly out, and resent the indignity, and with all his might will labour to avenge his father's quarrel. And can you then imagine, that Christ will forgive those impious and profane blasphemers of his Father, on whom will grant them the remission of their sins in baptism, who, after it, still go on to heap affronts upon the person of his Father, and to sin against him with the never-ceasing wickedness of their blasphemous tongues? Can any christian harbour such a thought; make such a persuasion an article of his creed, or vent the same in discourse and argument? What then will become of that commandment, which bids us *honour our father and mother*; if the relation of father, which we are commanded to honour in *men*, shall, in *God*, be insulted with impunity and safety? What will become of Christ's saying in the gospel, where he lays it down for a rule, *Whoever curseth father or mother, let him dye the death*; if he, who commandeth such as speak evil of their parents according to the flesh, to be put to death, shall be found to quicken such as speak evil of their heavenly Father, and live in enmity with the church their Mother? It is an abominable assertion of some, who say, that the very same person, who threatens a blasphemer of the Holy Ghost as guilty of an irremissible sin, doth yet vouchsafe to sanctify the blasphemers of God the Father with his holy baptism. But now they amongst us, who are for communicating with these persons, when they come over to the church, without baptizing them, consider not, that they become thence partakers of other mens sins, nay, even of irremissible sins; as admitting them to communion without baptism, who have no way, besides that of baptism, to cancel the guilt of their several blasphemies. Besides, when hereticks discover a willingness to forsake their sin and error, and acknowledge the true church; how absurd and unreasonable is it, to curtail the rights of that very church, and to weaken the virtue of her sacraments, by telling people, who come over to her in a penitent and mournful posture, that they have already received the remission of their sins; when yet they confess for themselves, that they have sinned, and do therefore come over to the church, that they may thence have the means of their forgiveness applied to them? Wherefore, dear brother, we should by all means maintain the due honour of the catholick church, and preserve her faith; and, by a strict adherence to the several rules of the gospel, and to the directions of the blessed apostles, we should manifest to the world the methods of the divine economy; and therein the regards which are paid to unity. I beseech you, can it be thought, that the efficacy of baptism is greater or more considerable than a confession of Christ, or suffering for his religion? Or can any thing be more meritorious than confessing him before men, and being baptized in one's own blood? Yet even such a baptism as this is, of no use to hereticks, tho' they should confess Christ, and even lay down their lives for his name's sake; except the patrons of hereticks will be so absurd, as to celebrate those for martyrs, who dye in a wrong confession of Christ; and to

Ep. LXXIII.
 Matt. 15. 13.

Luke 16. 8.

Exod. 20. 12.

Matt. 15. 4.

Luke 12. 10.

S. II.

That hereticks
 by their very
 return to the
 church, ac-
 knowledged
 themselves to
 have been out
 of it.

An irremissible sin. Rem. de peccatis aeternis; i. e. a sin of which will hold a man always obnoxious to punishment.

Weaken the virtue of her sacrament. i. e. By pleading, that her sacrament of baptism is not necessary, and so weakening its virtue, by dividing it in common, between the church and heresy.

Maintain the due honour. This was manifestly a prudential reason.

assign

assign them the glory and crown belonging to such, against the express testimony of the apostle; who hath roundly told them, it would *profit them nothing, tho' they should give their bodies to be burned*. If then the baptism of blood, and of a publick confession of Christ, will not avail an heretick to his salvation, because out of the church there is no salvation; how much less available must we judge a baptism, which is * celebrated in a corner, in a den of thieves, when he is dipped in a spurious water, and infected with its foul contagion; and is so far from putting off his old sins, that he contracts new and greater by it? Upon the whole therefore, there can be no baptism common to us and hereticks, who have not in common the same God the Father, nor the same Christ the Son, nor the same faith, nor the same church. So that they, who come over to the church from heresy, should by all means be baptized; and thus they, who are trained up to the kingdom of God by a divine regeneration thro' the one, only, true and proper baptism of the holy church, may have their new birth confirmed to them by both sacraments; inasmuch as we find it written, *Except a man be born again of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.
1 Cor. 13. 3.

John 3. 5.

§. 12. Upon this occasion, some, who fain would make the truth of the gospel of no effect, by human reasonings, are ever ready to urge us with the case of catechumens, and with the question thereupon, whether, if any of that order be seized by the secular powers, and put to death for the confession of Christ's name before they are baptized in the church, they shall be defeated of the hope of salvation, and the reward of such their confession, because they have not been born again with water? To which, let the abettors and favourers of hereticks take for answer; first, That such catechumens do hold the true faith entire, and maintain the unity of the church, and have begun their glorious march against the devil, with a full and hearty acknowledgment of God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Ghost: In the next place, that they are not really deprived of the sacrament of baptism, as being baptized in the greatest and most glorious baptism of all; viz. That of their own blood; concerning which our Lord hath said, *That he had a baptism to be baptized with*. Now that persons, who are so baptized with their own blood, and dedicated to him by suffering, are consummated, and become perfect christians, and, as such, entitled to the effect of his gracious promises; our Lord himself hath assured us in his gospel, where speaking to one of the thieves, who, * in the very article of suffering, believed on him, and confessed his name, he gave the said thief this comfortable assurance; *To day shalt thou be with me in paradise*. Wherefore we, who have the honour to be officers and governors in the household of faith, and thence to be entrusted with a more particular care of it, should be very cautious of deceiving those, who come over to it, and, upon the humblest professions of penitential sor-

§. 12.
An answer to
the objection;
that the
church ac-
knowledgeth
for martyrs
those, who
suffer whilst
they are cate-
chumens.

Luke 12. 50.

Ibid. 23. 43.

* *In a corner, in a den of thieves.*] The baptisms of hereticks were celebrated by persons invading another's office; and in that respect the society, in which such baptisms were celebrated, was called a *den of thieves*. Whereas the baptisms of the church, were celebrated in the most publick manner, in the face of the cathedral, or episcopal church, by the bishop himself, or by persons regularly acting under him, and by his commission.

† *Acknowledgment of God the Father, &c.*] This yet farther confirms to us the ground of our author's procedure with hereticks, in nulling their baptisms, viz. the difference of their faith, from that of the church. Here he finds a supply for a want of the ordinance it self, to persons agreeing in the same faith with the church. Schismatical baptisms were held invalid by him on the same account; since there could be no schism, without a difference in point of faith, upon the article of the church.

‡ *In the very article of suffering.*] They who would infer any thing from the example of the thief upon the cross in favour of a death-bed repentance, after a wicked life, not till then repented of, may find hence an antidote against the poyson of that persuasion. The reason of his acceptance, was his confession of Christ's name, under all the disadvantages of his suffering as a malefactor. So that all which was done in his favour, was supplying to him the want of baptism, which, if he had lived to partake of the ordinance, would have cancelled his former sins. His was therefore baptismal repentance, whose effects were allowed to be very great. But repentance of sins, committed after baptism, was entitled to no such effects, as to have them cancelled in an instant, not indeed till after a long and laborious penance.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIII.

§. 13.
A reply to another objection from the case of such as have been received upon their coming from heresy, tho' without being baptized. It is more over urged as the best way to convince hereticks of their error, not to receive them without baptism.

row desire to receive the remission of their sins; we should labour to reform and correct their error, and so to train them up for the kingdom of heaven, thro' all the proper stages of evangelical discipline.

§. 13. But some one, perhaps, will yet object, and ask; what then shall we judge of their case, who having formerly come over to the church from heresy, were admitted without baptism? To which I reply; that they are in the hands of a merciful God, who is able to dispense to them his gracious pardon, and to prevent their separation from the privileges of his church, who were admitted to it in the integrity of their hearts, and are fallen asleep in it. Yet because an error hath been once committed, we should not always go on committing the same; since it is more becoming the character of wise men who fear God, to follow the truth, when once discovered to them, readily and without delay, than obstinately to persist in a contest with their brethren and fellow-bishops, on behalf of hereticks. Nor let any one apprehend, that hereticks will be discouraged from coming over to the church, whilst such an obstacle as their submission to baptism lies in their way; as if, forsooth, the notion of a second baptism would scandalize or retard them; whereas, indeed, when the truth of things is in this way laid before them, they will rather find themselves driven hence upon a direct necessity of coming over to us: But if they find us concluding and determining for the legality and validity of that baptism which they celebrate, they will the more easily imagine themselves to be already in possession of the church, and of the several privileges thereunto belonging; nor will they therefore be apt to think that there is any sufficient reason for their coming over to us, when, by its being agreed, that they have true baptism amongst themselves, they will be ready to conclude, that they have every thing else with it. Whereas, I say, when they are once persuaded, that there is no baptism out of the church, and that remission of sins is not attainable out of her enclosure; they are naturally the more in haste to join with us, and are the more humble and earnest in soliciting the favours of the church, their mother; as being assured, that they can never attain the effect of God's gracious promises, until they have first come into the unity of the church; nor will hereticks any longer decline receiving the one true baptism of the church, when they shall be taught by us, that those persons were baptized by St. Paul, who had already been baptized with John's baptism, as we read in the Acts of the apostles.

Acts 19. 4. 5.

§. 14.
A reply to the last objection of those who believed the baptism of hereticks unlawful, but yet were against repeating it for fear of being thought to re-baptize.

§. 14. And yet some of our people do still contend for the baptism of hereticks, as being first in point of time; and hold it wrong to baptize any per-

[All the proper stages.] Not only by penance, but by baptism too, and by the several forms and courses preparatory to it.

[They are in the hands of a merciful God.] It was very far from being an uncharitable disposition in our author, which inclined him to stick so close by the rule of discipline, and to straiten therein of it: For still God was at liberty to treat the persons so dealt with as he pleased, and to relax what he should see good in the church above; but our author was, indeed, persuaded, that such relaxations in the church below would lay her too open to insults and invasions. He determined not, therefore, upon the final state of any, by any severities of discipline, which he thought fit to insist on; but insisted only, for the better security, to the honour and interest of the church upon earth; and the remainder of the §. will plainly inform the reader, that prudential reasons entered very deep into our author's determination.

[They will be ready to conclude.] All this (we see) proceeds upon the foot of prudential and discretionary reasons. Eusebius in b. 7. c. 9. hath preserved to us the substance of a letter written by Dionysius bishop of Alexandria to Xystus of Rome, telling him, that "a person who had been baptized by hereticks, and afterwards came over to the church, and communicated therewith, but without notice taken of his heretical baptism, being accidentally present at a baptism of the church, and observing the questions and answers to be very different from those which had been used at his own baptism, fell down before him (Dionysius) lamenting his case, and desiring to receive the baptism of the church; but Dionysius considering that he had for so long time been admitted to the higher mysteries of our religion, durst not baptize him (notwithstanding that he was otherwise of our author's opinion in this matter) but bid him be of good comfort, and go on to communicate as before." And he immediately sent an account of this affair to Xystus, for his advice and opinion, whether he had done right in it. Upon which bishop Fell observes, that the usual method of the church in cases of this nature, was to proceed by the hypothetical form of baptism. And, indeed, the whole case implies, that the church then apprehended her self to have a power of supplying the defects in an irregular baptism.

son,

son, tho' baptized by the enemies of God, for fear of the odium and imputation of re-baptizing; notwithstanding that we find those baptized afterwards whom *John* had baptized before; even that same *John*, than whom there was no greater prophet; that *John*, who was filled with the grace of God, whilst yet in his Mothers womb; he who went forth in the spirit and power of *Elias*; who was so far from being an enemy to our Lord, that he was his forerunner to preach him to the world; and that not in word only, but even to point him out to the senses of men: And finally, he, who baptized Christ himself, by whose authority others after him were thenceforwards to be baptized. But now if an heretick stands entitled to the right of baptizing, merely from his seizing it; the consequence will be, that baptism will not be judged belonging to such as are^d in possession of it, but to such as first can catch it: And thus, since baptism cannot be separated nor divided from the church; he who first can seize upon her baptism, will be thought to have gotten possession of the church with it; and then what can hinder you from appearing the heretick, when he is beforehand with you, and hath distanced you? Who by yielding up this great point to him, have abandoned and left behind to him, the right to which you stood once entitled? But now how dangerous it is to depart from one's rights in cases of a spiritual nature, the holy scripture hath declared in the book of *Genesis*; where *Eſau* is represented as losing his birth-right, without being able to recover it, because he had quitted claim to it. These things, my dear brother, I have thought proper to return in answer to you, with all the brevity I could use; yet by no means hereby intending to prescribe to any person, or so to prejudge the cause, as to hinder any bishop from acting herein, according to his own judgment, as^e having full power to do what he pleaseth. For my own part I shall never think it fit for me to contend with my colleagues, and brother bishops, on the behalf of hereticks; as being always resolved to preserve an entire harmony with my brethren, which, I am sure, is most agreeable to the will of our Lord; especially since the apostle hath told us, *If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom neither the churches of God*. I am therefore, for my self, determined to preserve with all patience and constancy, the rules of charity, the honour of our episcopal college, the bands of faith, and the unity of our priesthood; For which reason I have written a tract upon the *advantages of patience*, according to the best of my small abilities, with the permission and help of God; and this I have sent to you, as the rules of our mutual affection do in such cases direct us. My dearest brother, I ever wish well to you, and so take my leave.

^d In possession of it.] This the church confessedly was, and hereticks took it from her; but if their unlawful seizure carried right along with it; then, as our author argues, he who first could catch it, would be judged entitled to that right. This he chargeth upon his adversaries, as an absurdity flowing from their opinions. I do not here trouble my reader with a particular detail of *Augustin's* answers to him, because he hath had it already in my notes upon the several suffrages of the council of *Carthage*.

^e Having full power.] If the scriptures (saith bishop *Pell*) had determined any thing in this affair, or if the question had been determined by a synod, of which *Jabianus* had been a member; he would not, then, have had so full a power to do as he pleased: But *Jabianus* and *Quintus*, both being bishops of *Mauritania*, and the synods which had hitherto been held upon this subject, consisting only of *African* and *Numidian* bishops; as see note [provinces of *Africa* and *Numidia*] in §. 2. epist. 71. and the question being of such a nature, as that men might well enough differ from each other upon it, till it had been decisively determined; our author very properly writes in this strain to *Jabianus*, and only tells him what his own opinion was upon it, without prescribing his own, as a measure to another's; since that other had as much right to prescribe to him; the power of all bishops being equal, as to the management of discipline in their own particular districts; and our author's manner of writing upon this question, clearly speaks his opinion of it, that it was a point of discipline; he handles it just as *St. Paul* did the business alluded to in 1 Cor. xi. 16.

AND 256.
Ep. LXXIV.

EPISTLE LXXIV.

Written after
his return.

Soon after the sending to Jubalanus the former epistle, our author received a letter from pope Steven, which is lost; and no other fragments of it are preserved, but what are alluded to in this and the following epistle. Our author's personal character was at that time superior to Steven's, and he managed the contest with more temper; and the persecution coming on soon after, made all appearances of difference, between two such eminent bishops, exceedingly improper to remain upon record, especially the behaviour of Steven in it, which was very unjustifiable; so that it is no wonder we have no remains of his letter, but what are preserved in this of our author. Baronius therefore was very hard upon our author, when he censured him, for not preserving the whole of pope Steven's letter, in this to Pompeius; whereas he sent to Pompeius a copy of it, to which he here refers, as he finds occasion. This was that Pompeius of Sabrata in Tripoly, whose suffrage we have, by his proxy Natalis, in the Council of Cathage, N^o. 83, 84, 85. He, hearing that Steven had written to our author upon this subject, had desired to be acquainted with the contents of his letter; which our author therefore sent him a copy of, answering at the same time the main arguments in it, which were drawn from tradition, the practice of hereticks, and the validity of their baptisms, as being celebrated in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time he likewise sent, to this Pompeius, copies of the other letters which he had written upon this subject. It is observable of these two great bishops, that their propositions were very general; one said, that no heretick nor schismatick whatsoever, coming over to the church, ought to be baptized; the other affirmed in terms of equal latitude, that all hereticks and schismaticks ought to be baptized, before they were received and reconciled. The church, in after-times, when the heats were cooled, which this controversy had kindled, made a distinction; admitting the baptism of schismaticks, and making a distinction between that of some hereticks and others; as their errors more or less affected the form of baptism.

CYPRIAN to his brother Pompeius sends greeting.

S. I.

ALTHOUGH, my dear brother, I have comprized the substance of what may be said upon the case of baptizing hereticks; in those several letters, of which I have sent you copies; yet, inasmuch as you desire to be made acquainted with what our brother Steven hath returned in answer to my letters upon that subject, I have herewith sent you a copy of such his answer; in reading which you will more and more observe his error, who labours to maintain the cause of hereticks against christians, and the church of God. For among other things written by him, unwarily and unskillfully, with great pride, impertinence,

Written by him unwarily, &c.] Did our author, think we, who was thus bold with his Holiness, acknowledge either his supremacy, or infallibility? Or is it credible, that there should then have been any notion of either; and that a man, of our author's character, should thus fly in the face of his

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and self-contradiction, he hath proceeded so far as to dictate thus: *If any come over to us from any heresy whatsoever, let no innovations be made in the custom handed down to us from tradition; and therefore let such persons be received by imposition of hands, in order to their penance; forasmuch as they, who are properly hereticks, baptize not the persons who come over to them from any other sect, but receive them by communion only.* In which words he hath forbidden those to be baptized, who come over from any heresy whatsoever; i. e. indeed, he hath pronounced the baptisms of all hereticks to be legal and valid. And whereas each particular heresy hath a distinct baptism, and holds its distinct errors; he, by communicating with each upon the foot of such baptism, amasseth their whole heap of errors, and sheltereth them within his own bosom. He hath been pleased moreover to issue out his farther orders; forbidding any innovations to be made in the custom handed down to us from tradition; as if he could be censured for making any such innovations, who is for maintaining the unity of the church, and for insisting on her title to baptism exclusive of other pretensions; and not rather he, who overlooking all regards of unity, declares himself in favour of injurious usurpations, and of false and pretended baptisms. *Let no innovations* (saith he) *be made in the custom handed down to us from tradition.* But from whence, I would ask, have we this tradition? Do we derive it from the immediate authority of our Lord himself in the gospel? Or cometh it down to us from the directions of the apostles in any of their epistles? For God hath most plainly given us to understand, that his written will is to be followed, where we find him thus directing Joshua, and saying, *This book of the law* Joshua 1. 8. *shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all which is written therein.* Our Lord also, when he sent forth his apostles, ordered, *That the Gentiles should be baptized, and taught to observe all things which he had commanded them.* Matt. 20. 28. If then there be any where extant, either in the gospel it self, or in the epistles or acts of the apostles, an express direction, that hereticks should not be baptized, but only receive^d imposition of hands, in order to their penance; let such an holy and heavenly tradition be, by all means, observed. But now, on the other hand; if hereticks have every where in scripture the character of enemies and antichrists; if they are to be avoided as persons *subverted and self-condemned*; how is it, that we must not condemn them, when, as the

out any ceremony or excuse, any softning preamble or healing introduction? Doth he not rather treat Steven upon a foot of equality, as one who had used him ill, and deserved, in return, some smart expression of his resentment? For indeed pope Steven had been so outrageous, as to denounce his anathema's against all, who should hold in this point with our author; who, on the other hand, tho' he had as much right as Steven to do so, would prescribe to no bishop, but only gave the reasons of his own opinion and practice.

^b Properly hereticks. Cum ipsi heretici propriè alterutrum ad se venientes non baptizant, sed communicant tantum. The words, (*properly hereticks*), saith Rigaltius, denote those persons who held unsound opinions in other respects, besides this case of baptism, and the church; and so the Novatians seem excepted out of this character by Steven's construction. The word *alterutrum* means, that the several sects of hereticks received such as came over to them from any other sect (so, for instance, a Marcionite would receive a Marcionite,) without baptizing them. But all hereticks baptized such as came to them from the church, saith bishop Fell; and so what is here asserted, will consist with what was said in 2. 2. of the preceding epistle; and if Steven intended by the words (*properly hereticks*) to exclude the Novatians from being strictly of their number; what is here asserted, would otherwise well enough consist with what is there mentioned, which hath no respect to any, but the Novatians only.

^c His written will. Which is here directly opposed to tradition. Let the Romanists see, what they may make of this. *Imposition of hands, in order to their penance.* This was the ceremony wherewith penitents were anciently received to penance; and accordingly the council of Agatha, in Can. 15. directed people to conform to this general law, when, in the declaration of discipline it was growing into desuetude. It was also the ceremony, wherewith each prayer for them was accompanied, in the solemn offices of public worship: And, at their absolution, it was again repeated.

^d Self-condemned. This (saith Rigaltius) was literally verified in the case of Marcion; who being finally quite cut off from the church, for his never-ceasing dissensions, professed himself, at last, a penitent; and was to have been restored, upon condition, that he brought in those with him, whom he had seduced; but herein he was prevented by death. Tertull. de praescript. c. 30.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIV.

apostle hath born witness, they are condemned by themselves? So that no one should presume to defame the apostles, as if they approved the baptisms of hereticks, or admitted them to communion without baptizing them; when yet there are extant such severe censures of the apostles upon hereticks; and these recorded at a time, when the ranker sorts of heresy had not yet broke out upon the church; when *Marcion* had not yet appeared from *Pontus*, whose master *Cerdon* came to *Rome* in the pontificate of pope *Hyginus*, the 9th bishop of that see; whom *Marcion* so followed, as to improve upon his master's errors, and to blaspheme with more daring impudence than others against God, the Father and creator; and to point his audacious heresy, where-with he rebelled against the church, with a keener malice, as well as to arm it with a new set of offensive weapons. Now if it be apparent, that more and worse heresies started up in after times, and if it was never in times before commanded, or written, that hands should only be laid upon hereticks, in order to their penance, and so they should be admitted to communion; if, farther, there be but one baptism, and that with us, in the pale of the church, and granted by the favour of God to her only; what obstinate and hardy presumption must it be, to prefer the tradition of men before the appointment of God; nor at the same time to consider, that God is always angry, whenever human tradition overlooks, or weakens, the authority of the divine commands?

Isai. 29. 13.

Thus he hath complained by his prophet, saying; *This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far removed from me: But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* And our Lord hath accordingly censured this practice in his gospel, where he saith;

Mark 7. 13.

Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Which observation and censure the blessed apostle *St. Paul* bearing in mind, hath added this farther comment thereupon, and thus instructed us,

1 Tim. 6. 3.

saying; *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to his doctrine; his pride hath stupified him, and he knoweth nothing; from such we must withdraw.*

4. 5.

§. 2.

He objects to Steven, that he followed the example of hereticks, in defence of his tradition.

2. Our brother *Steven* hath, indeed, laid before us a notable tradition, and of great authority to lead our practice! Having added, in the same part of his letter, these following words; *Forasmuch as they who are properly hereticks, baptize not the persons who come over to them from any other sect, but receive them by communion only.* It seems then, that the church of God, the spouse of Christ, is sunk to such a low ebb of misfortunes, that she must even take the pattern of her practice from hereticks; and, in the cele-

[whose master *Cerdon*.] Here our author appears to have borrowed his account from *Irenaeus*, b. 1. c. 28. faith the forementioned *Rigaltius*.

[Hyginus the 9th bishop.] So the counterfeit *Terrullian* had computed, faith the same *Rigaltius*, in those verses of his towards the conclusion of the 3^d book;

*Constabat pietate vigens Ecclesia Roma
Composita a Petro, cuius successor & ipse,
WJamq; loco nobis cathedram suscepit Hyginus.*

by reckoning thus, exclusively, of the apostle *Peter*, who first sat in that chair—1. *Linus*, 2. *Cletus*, 3. *Anacleus*, 4. *Clemens*, 5. *Evaristus*, 6. *Alexander*, 7. *Sixtus*, 8. *Telephorus*, and 9. *Hyginus*. *Irenaeus* in b. 1. c. 28. reckoned *Hyginus* the 9th bishop of *Rome*, but in b. 3. c. 3. he makes him the 8th; I suppose, in the one computation, reckoning the apostle *Peter* the first bishop; and in the other, beginning his account from *Linus*; after whom he reckons, 1. *Anacleus*, 2. *Clemens*, 3. *Evaristus*, 4. *Alexander*, 5. *Sixtus*, 6. *Telephorus*, and 8. *Hyginus*. And this way of reckoning our learned editor approves as the best, only he would begin with *St. Peter*, and make him the first bishop, and then take the rest in the order here assigned to them: So then *Cletus* must be struck out of the list, as the same person with *Anacleus*.

[In times before.] Viz. when there were fewer heresies, and those not so rank as in after times; if nothing then was written in favour of heretical ministrations; much less, as our author reasons, would any such thing now be written for them, when they are so much worse.

[In vain, &c.] See this passage cited and noted in §. 6. of the 63^d epistle.

[His pride hath stupified him.] *Stupore elatus est.* Such a conceit, faith *Rigaltius*, as that whereby women desire to attract the admiration, and even astonishment of beholders.

[Of great authority.] The reader will easily perceive, that this is all irony and banter.

2. *bration*

bration of her heavenly sacraments, light must borrow from darkness her ^m methods of discipline, and christians must follow the example of antichrists. But now what blindness of heart, and corruption of manners must it be, which will not suffer us to acknowledge that unity of the faith, which is derived to us from God the Father, and from the tradition of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God?

3. For if the church is not with hereticks, because she is but one, and cannot be divided; if the Holy Ghost be not with them, because he is also one, and will never vouchsafe his presence to aliens and profane persons; by the same rule and reason, baptism, which is one, as each of them is, cannot be with hereticks, because it cannot be separated from the church, nor from the Holy Ghost.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIV.
§. 3.
That where there is no church, and no Holy Ghost, there is no baptism.

4. Or if they say, that they impute the good effects of such a baptism to the majesty of the name which is used in it; so that they who are any where or after any manner baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, should be judged, renewed and sanctified; why then are not hands effectually there laid upon the baptized person, in the name of the same Christ, and why doth he not receive the Holy Ghost from such imposition of hands upon him? Why is not the majesty of this name as powerful in the one case, as it is contended and insisted, that it is in the other? For if a person who hath his second birth out of the church, may become the temple of God; why may not the Holy Ghost be poured upon his temple? For he who putteth off his sins in baptism, and thereby is sanctified; and, in a spiritual sense, is become a new man, is certainly thence fitted to receive the Holy Ghost; especially since the apostle hath declared, that *as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*. He then who being baptized amongst hereticks, hath put on Christ, may as well, at least, and easily receive the Holy Ghost, whom Christ hath sent. For he who is sent, would otherwise be greater than he who sent him; if a person baptized out of the church might put on Christ, but could not there with receive the Holy Ghost; as if Christ could be really put on without the Spirit, or as if the Spirit could really be separated from Christ. They who thus reason, run themselves besides, upon this farther absurdity of holding, that tho' our second birth, whereby we are born again in Christ, thro' the laver of generation, be spiritual; yet, a person may be thus spiritually born again amongst hereticks, where the Spirit is denied to be. For water alone, is certain, can sanctify no man; nor purge away his sins, except the Holy Ghost be with it. Wherefore, they must either grant, that the Spirit is where they affirm baptism to be; or else, that there is no baptism where the Spirit is not; because there cannot be a baptism without the Spirit. Then, what a monstrous assertion is it to contend for, that they may become the sons of God who are not so born within the church? For that it is baptism in which the old man dies, and the new one is born, the blessed apostle clearly proves where he saith, of our Saviour, *that he saved us by the washing of regeneration*. Now if regeneration be in this laver, this baptism; how can heresy,

§. 4.
That using the name of Christ is not sufficient to make a baptism.

Galat. 3. 27.

Tit. 3. 5.

[Methods of discipline.] Here our author expressly puts the treatment of hereticks, with regard to the allowance, or disallowance of their baptisms, upon the foot of discipline. He only insists, as to scripture, that it was not against him; and so far favoured in general the utmost severity against hereticks, as it hath mentioned them always in terms of the greatest abhorrence.

[Why then are not hands there laid.] This was an argument *ad hominem*. They of the church who agreed the validity of these heretical baptisms, did, however agree it to be necessary, that the persons so baptized should have imposition of hands from a bishop of the church, in order to their receiving the Holy Ghost. And our author argues with them upon this common principle, asking why one of these ceremonies should be held more necessary than the other? Or why the baptism of hereticks should be esteemed more valid, than their imposition of hands? For they too laid hands on the persons they baptized; only it was judged, that they did it not effectually.

[Put on Christ.] Rigaltius here hath given his reader *Augustin's* solution of this argument, in b. 5. c. 24. against the *Donatists*. Some men put on Christ (saith he) as far as to receiving the sacrament; others, as far as to the sanctification of their lives. And this is the difference between good and bad men in receiving one and the same sacrament.

which

A. D. 256. Ep. LXXIV. which is not the spouse of Christ, beget sons to God thro' Christ? It is the church alone, which being united and married to Christ, begets sons after a spiritual manner; the same apostle having elsewhere told us, that *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water.* Wherefore if this be the beloved spouse of Christ, which alone is sanctified and cleansed with his washing; it is evident, that heresy (which not being the spouse of Christ, can neither be cleansed nor sanctified with his washing) cannot beget any sons to God. Farther; a man is not thus born, when he receives the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands, but in baptism; so that he is first born, before he receives the spirit, as we read in the case of *Adam*, whom God first *formed*, and afterwards *breathed into his nostrils the breath* (or spirit) *of life.* For indeed the Spirit cannot be received, before there be a person to receive it. Since therefore the birth of christians is in their baptism, and the generation, as well as sanctification, which is by baptism, is only with the spouse of Christ, who alone can spiritually beget and bring forth sons to God; where, and whence, and to whom, must he be born, who is not a son of the church? Or how can he have God for his father, before he hath the church for his mother? Forasmuch then as no heresy, and indeed no schism, can have, out of the church, the true sanctification of baptism; I wonder why our brother *Steven* should proceed so far in his obstinate opinion, as to contend, with earnestness, that sons are born to God, even by the baptism of *Marcion, Valentinus, and Apelles*, and other blasphemers of God the Father; that remission of sins is there given in the name of Jesus Christ, where continual blasphemies are uttered against the Father, and against Christ, our Lord God.

9. 5.
That it is dangerous to the bishop, to admit heretics into the church, without baptizing them.

Mal. 2. 1, 2.

5. Upon this occasion, dear brother, our regard and faithfulness to the honour of our priestly function, should engage us to consider, whether in the day of judgment a bishop will be able to pass his accounts, ^a who is for asserting and maintaining the baptisms of blasphemers; especially when it is remember'd what our Lord hath denounced in the prophet, saying; *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you: If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of Hosts; I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings.* But now, doth he give glory to God, who communicates with a person baptized by *Marcion*? Doth he give glory to God, who judgeth that remission of sins may be given by the blasphemers of God? Doth he give glory to God, who affirmeth, that children are born to God, out of his family, from an harlot and a strumpet? Doth he give glory to God, who, not abiding by that truth and unity prescribed by the law of God, takes upon him the vindication of heresies against the church? Once more; doth he give glory to God, who approves himself a friend of hereticks, and an enemy to christians, and, as such, ^r would excommunicate those bishops of God, who stand up for the truth of Christ, and the unity of his church? If this be giving glory to God; if the fear of God, and the regards for his discipline, be thus maintained by his worshippers and his bishops; let us even throw away our arms, and surrender our persons, and let us be the devil's bondsmen: To him let us deliver up the disposition of the gospel, the appointments of Christ, and the majesty of God; let the engagements of the christian to his spiritual warfare stand

^a Marcion, Valentinus, and Apelles.] See these several heresies noted in §. 4. of the preceding epistle.

^r Who is for asserting, &c.] The bishop's danger arose, in our author's opinion, from his too little regard to the honour of the church, when he suffered her discipline to be so loose; and this he expressly mentions a little lower in the same §.

^r Would excommunicate.] Here he glances upon the conduct of *Steven*, who had declared he would communicate with none, who held our author's opinions upon this question; and accordingly refused to the legates, who were sent to him upon this occasion, the common civilities of his house and table, as well as communion.

all for nothing; let him abandon his colours; let the church yield up her cause to hereticks; let light give way to darkness; the true faith veil to the betrayers of it; hope to despair; reason to error; immortality to death; charity to hatred; truth to falsehood; and Christ to antichrist. Well may heresies and schisms spring up daily, and shoot out their fatal branches with infinite increase, spreading far and near the effects of their deadly poyson; whilst they gain authority and establishment from certain advocates, who patronize their baptisms, and therewith betray the true faith, by defending within the church, what is acted out of it, and in opposition to it. If, dear brother, there be amongst us any fear of God, or any due regard to his faith; if we would keep the commandments of Christ, and maintain the purity of his spouse inviolate and uncorrupted; in short, if those words of our Lord have made any suitable impression upon our hearts and memories; *When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?* Let us behave, as becomes the faithful soldiers of God, who serve under him with a sincere devotion; and accordingly let us guard the camp, in which he hath posted us, with fortitude and honour.

6. Nor should the custom, which hath gradually obtained in some particular places, be pleaded in opposition to the prevalence of truth: For custom, without truth to support it, is nothing more, nor better, than an inveterate error. Wherefore let us forsake all error to follow the truth, which, as we find it written in the book of *Esdrae*, prevailed; *As for the truth, it endureth, and is always strong; it liveth, and conquereth for evermore.* *With her there is no accepting of persons, nor making of distinctions; but she doth the things which are just; neither in her judgment is any unrighteousness; and she is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth.* This same truth Christ himself hath pointed to us in his gospel, saying; *I am the Truth.* Wherefore, if we are in Christ, and have Christ in us; if we abide in the truth, and the truth abideth in us; let us never cease to maintain it, and to hold it fast.

7. It is obstinacy and presumption, which inclines men to defend their own perverse errors, rather than to give into the notions of another, tho' more right and true. In view of which evil disposition, the blessed apostle St. Paul wrote this advice to Timothy, *That a bishop must not strive, but should be gentle unto all men, and docible.* Now he is properly docible, who is meek and patient enough to learn. For a bishop ought not only to teach; but learn; inasmuch as he will be the better qualified for teaching, who, by learning more and more, makes continual improvements. And this is well inculcated by the same apostle, directing, *That, if any thing be revealed to another who sitteth by, the first should hold his peace.*

8. They, who simply and honestly mean the truth, and would rid themselves of error, have a short and easy way to both these ends. For if we will apply our selves to the fountain head of divine tradition, all human errors will presently disappear; and when we thence discern the method and oeconomy of God's holy sacraments, all clouds and darkness will vanish, and the light of truth will break out from under them. Should a pipe, thro' which water was used to be carried in great abundance, be stopped on a sudden; would you not go to the spring which furnished it, and there look out for the reason of the failure? Whether the veins of water which supplied the fountain were dried up; or whether the streams flowed thence in their accu-

[Guard the camp.] i. e. The church; by securing it from the wanton insults of hereticks and schismatics. They were not to come in (our author meant) at pleasure.
[Making of distinctions.] *Nec est apud eam accipere personam, nec differentias*, saith our author, as the LXX read it, *ad 2. 1000*. So doth the vulgar Latin. But the Syriac reads it, *No change*; Truth is immutable.
[Docible.] *Docilem*, saith our author; and with him the vulgar Latin. The original reads it, *didaximus*, apt to teach, as we translate it; and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, do the same.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXIV.

Ephes. 4. 4,
5, 6.

Solomon's song
c. 4. v. 12, 13,
15.

1 Pet. 3. 20,
21.

tomed plenty, and were stopped in the middle of their passage; so that if the hindrance of the waters flowing proceeded from any stoppage or leakage in the pipe, it might be forthwith repaired, and the water might pass on in the same quantity wherein it came originally from its spring-head, for the several uses of the place it was designed for? Thus should the bishops of God behave upon the present occasion, if we would keep his commandments; *i. e.* in any case where the truth is shocked or disputed, we should resort to our "fountain-head, to the gospel of our Lord, and the tradition of his apostles; and thence our conduct should take its rise, from whence our religion and all its ordinances took theirs. Now this tradition tells us, that there is *one God, and one Christ; one hope, and one faith*; and one church, and *one baptism*; which is only in the church, from the unity of which whosoever departeth, must be found in company with hereticks; whom whilst he patronizes against the church, he opposes the truths which are derived to us from this tradition. A figure of this unity we may see represented to us under the person of Christ, saying, in the song of songs; *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a fountain sealed, a well of living water, an orchard of pomegranates.* Now if his church be a garden shut up, and a fountain sealed; how can he who is not in this church, either go into this garden, or drink of this fountain? Thus, also, St. Peter pointing to, and insisting on, this unity, hath sufficiently intimated, that we cannot be served but by the one only baptism of this one church; *In the ark of Noah eight souls were saved by water; as baptism, in like manner, shall save us.* In what a compendious way have we here represented to us the sum and substance of this mysterious unity? For as in "that baptism of the world, whereby the old wickedness of the world was purged; he who was not in Noah's ark could not be saved by, or thro' water; so neither can he be saved by our present baptism, who is not baptized in the church; which is founded on the unity prescribed by our Lord, according to the figure exhibited to us in that *one ark.* Wherefore, dear brother, upon a thorough discussion of this important question, and of the arguments which support it, we have determined to proceed in this way; *viz.* to baptize all who come over to the church from any heresy whatsoever; excepting those only who having been before baptized in the church, have after such baptism gone over to hereticks: For as to these, when they return to us, they need only to be received by imposition of hands, upon their submission to proper penance, and so may be reinstated in the sheepfold from which they have strayed. My dear brother, I heartily wish your welfare, and so take my leave of you.

"Our fountain head, &c."] This was plainly the written word of God; what either Christ or his apostles delivered by word of mouth, and was consigned to writing. Other, unwritten, traditions, we see in this very instance were uncertain, and were pleaded on both sides of the question.

"Thus baptism of the world."] As baptism is, with us, a technical term, signifying the ceremony of our initiation into Christ's religion: The English reader may not, perhaps, so well nor easily discern our author's meaning; but when he shall consider, that baptism meant originally nothing more than washing; he will easily observe the propriety of the allusion, from the wickedness of the old world, being washed, or cleansed by that immersion in the waters of the flood, to the cleansing of the new man, according to Christ Jesus by the laver of regeneration. Rigaltius saith, upon this occasion, that our author here imitated his master Tertullian, "who had formed the same comparison; and observed, "moreover, upon it, that he chose the rather, to compare baptism with the deluge; because, after the "one and the other, they who had again offended, were destined to the same condemnation; the world "itself, and its inhabitants being doomed, in both those cases, to a general destruction by fire."

"Upon their submission."] In the concluding words of this epistle, we have the whole of our author's opinion entirely represented to us. *i. e.* If the persons who came over to the church from heresy or schism, had originally received their baptism from the church, before they had joined with such heresy or schism, then it was enough to assign them penance, and afterwards to confirm them in order to their absolution, or admission into the church: But if they had originally received their baptism *out of the church, i. e.* amongst hereticks or schismatics; then our author was against admitting them into the church, without administering to them its baptism, which, he thought, could not be had out of it.

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXV.

EPISTLE LXXV.

Our author hearing that pope Steven had written to the bishops of the Eastern churches upon the foregoing subject, wrote (himself) an account of all which had passed about it, to Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea in Capadocia, being at that time the most considerable bishop in those parts; and with his letter sent copies of those which he had written to Steven and Jubaianus. Our author's letter to Firmilian is not extant; but we have here Firmilian's answer to it; who was long ago apprized of this controversy, in the case of the Montanists, whose baptisms were disputed upon the same foot with the Novatian baptisms; the Montanists not being then suspected of any thing more than schism, as not having then explained their heretical notions. If they had been considered as heretics, their baptisms would have been unquestionably rejected; but as they were reputed only schismaticks, the case was new, and therefore required a determination, which went against them in the synod held for that purpose, at Iconium, several years before the famous council at Carthage; and schismatical as well as heretical baptisms were there rejected. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, wrote likewise upon this occasion to Steven, in favour of Firmilian, and the Eastern bishops, declaring his opinion to be the same with theirs, and the African bishops; and begging of Steven, that he would not push his proceedings too far against them. Firmilian's answer to our author was written when the winter was near approaching; and our author's silence is argument enough, that he had not received it, when he opened his Carthaginian council. It was written originally in Greek (saith Rigaltius) and translated by our author into Latin, as may well be gathered from the style, which is Cyprianic. This Firmilian was a disciple of Origen's; but his letter makes so bold with his holiness of Rome, that if Morellius had not published it, Pamelius would have condemned it to perpetual darkness. And Latinus Latinus (saith bishop Fell) roundly takes upon himself the omission of it (and acquits Manutius) avowing that he designedly left it out, from his abhorrence of the pertness and petulancy of its writer; as he declares expressly in p. 177. of his Bibliotheca sacra: Rather than an author of Firmilian's fame and antiquity should appear against the bishop of Rome, and his modern pretensions; we should have lost this venerable monument, if it had not been happily rescued from the hands of these professed depredators.

Firmilian to CYPRIAN, his brother in the Lord, sendeth greeting.



Received, my dearest brother, the letter which you sent me by our well-beloved Rogatian, your deacon; and am very thankful to our Lord, who hath so ordered it, that we, who are separated from each other in body, are so united in spirit; as if we dwelt together not in the same countrey only, but even in the same house; which is the more fit to be observed, in regard that the spiritual house of God is really one. For it shall come to pass, saith the prophet,

§. 1.

A. D. 256.
EPIST. LXXV.
Ist. 2. 2.

Psal. 27. 4.

Ibid. 133. 1.

Luke 15. 10.

§. 2.
That the unity of christians depends upon the divine unity.

phet, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord, * and the house of God shall be conspicuous upon the top of the mountains; in which such as meet together with gladness of heart are united to each other, according to that demand of the Psalmist from the Lord, that he might dwell in the house of God all the days of his life: And it appears elsewhere, that good men take a great deal of pleasure in so meeting; Behold (saith the Psalmist) ^b how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity. For unity, peace and concord, do not only afford the highest pleasure to men, who are believers, and who know the truth; but even to the angels themselves in heaven; who, as the word of God hath informed us, have joy in a sinner who repenteth, and returneth to the bonds of unity; which would never, we may be sure, have been said of angels, who have their conversation in heaven, unless they, who are represented as having joy in our unity, were, themselves, united to us: On the other hand therefore they must needs be grieved proportionably, as they observe amongst us any diversity of sentiments, or jar of inclinations; that we pray not jointly to our Lord, who is one and the same to all of us, and are so divided from each other, that we can hold no discourse together, * even in common conversation. Yet this advantage perhaps we gain from Steven's inhumanity, that we have thence the more experience of your wisdom and virtue. But altho' we may receive this accidental benefit from Steven's conduct; we owe him no thanks for it, nor hath his procedure been such, as in any manner to deserve them. Judas was very far from the merit of deriving those mighty benefits to the world, which his treachery, in betraying our Saviour, was the accidental cause of; nor was he thence to be reputed as the person, thro' whose means the deliverance of the Gentiles was wrought. But let Steven's unfair carriage upon this occasion for the present be passed over; lest by dwelling too long upon it, we only increase the sorrow it hath given us. We rather chuse to take notice of your behaviour, who have proceeded in this affair agreeably to the rule of truth, and the wisdom of Christ; and, with great joy, we give thanks to God, that we find in our brethren, who are so remote from us, such harmony and agreement with us in the faith and truth.

2. For the grace of God is able to cement those together in the bonds of unity and charity, who seem disjoined a great way from each other, by distance of place and country: Even as the same heavenly influence inspired those holy men, who lived in such different times, with an unanimity of sentiments; I mean Ezekiel and Daniel, who were the younger; and Job and Noah, who flourished so much earlier; these, tho' they had a wide interval of time between them, were led, however, into the same opinions, by the same holy inspiration. The same happy circumstance we now observe with pleasure; that you, who are disjoined from us by so many countries lying between us and you, do yet approve your selves united to us in

And the house of God.] In the little variations, which are here observable, from the Hebrew, and from our version of it, our author, according to his manner, followeth the LXX.

How good.] Grotius, upon this passage of scripture, hath most pertinently cited that of Menander, as its very counter-part. *Ὁς αὐτὸν ὡς ἀδελφεὸν ἐμαρτυρεῖται. Rigaltius.*

Steven's inhumanity.] This was the more remarkable from the quite contrary conduct of our author and his adherents, who declared against imposing their opinions upon any, or excommunicating any for their diversity of sentiments; whereas Steven's procedure was the very reverse of this.

Brethren so remote.] The generality of the Egyptian bishops were with our author in this question; and Dionysius of Alexandria tells us, who was Steven's successor, that he had with him the express opinions of the several bishops of Antioch, Caesarea, Elia, Tyre, Lydda, and Tarsus. So that the imputation of novelty was with more reason chargeable upon Steven, than upon those of the other side.

Job.] The reader will here observe our author's opinion of the age of Job; how early he places it amongst the first patriarchs.

heart

heart and principle: All which ariseth from the divine unity. For since one and the same Lord dwelleth in us; he joineth together those, who are his, all the world over, with the same bonds of unity. From whence it came to pass, that the *sound* of them *went forth into all the earth*, who were sent by him, and who made the swifter progress for making it in unity. On the other hand, it is of little consequence to men, that they be joined together by their bodily presence, if their minds be found dissenting from each other; and those minds can never be united to each other, which have divided themselves from the unity of God; *Lo, they* (saith holy scripture) *shall perish, who are far from thee*; such shall undergo the just judgment of God, for their opposition to those words of our Lord, wherein he prayed to his Father, that they might be united, saying, Father, *Grant that they may be one, even as we are one.* As for us; we come into the contents of your letter, as perfectly, as if the measures therein specified were altogether our own; nor did we read it hastily, but went over it more than once, that we might imprint it fast upon our memories; since we conceive it rather conducive, than detrimental, to the interests of our common salvation, not only to repeat such lessons often, that the truth may be more and more confirmed in us; but even to add, as we find occasion, to the arguments which support it: Yet if at any time we have taken this liberty with you, we did it with no design of insinuating that you had said too little; but, as you know, the word of God is infinitely comprehensive, surpassing all the powers of human nature to take in the whole of it, or of an human soul to conceive the length and breadth of it. The number of prophets is for this reason so great and various, that the wisdom of God, being so manifold and extensive, might the better be dispersed thro' a diversity of preachers: And for the same reason, if *any thing be revealed to a second person speaking by prophecy, the first is directed to hold his peace.* Upon the same foot we find a necessity of assembling our bishops and presbyters every year, for the more orderly management of the several affairs wherewith we are entrusted; that so, if there be any thing occurring to us of more than ordinary moment, it may receive a determination from us by common concert; that some remedy may be found by penance for such of our brethren, as have either lapsed in time of persecution, or been tempted by the devil to some grievous sin after their saving baptism; not that we pretend to give them the remission of their sins; but only to work in them a just sense of their transgressions, and thence to put them upon fit endeavours for making their peace with God. Wherefore in regard the winter is near approaching, and your messenger hastens his return to you; we have written back such an answer to your letter, as the time would suffer us to prepare.

3. As to what *Steven* hath asserted, concerning the apostle's forbidding persons to be baptized who come over from heresy, and their handing down this rule to posterity; you have given a full and sufficient answer, that no one surely can be so weak as to believe the apostles made any such rule, inasmuch

A. D. 256.
Epist. LXXV.

Psal. 19. 4.

Psal. 73. 27.

John 17. 22.

1 Cor. 14. 30.

§. 3.

The assertion of Steven concerning, that the apostles forbade such persons to be baptized, as came over from heretics.

§ To take in the whole of it.] Therefore it was no reflection upon any man, that another hit upon what he missed: Since no one man could comprehend the whole of it.

§ Every year.] Viz. just after Easter; which was the most general season; and often besides about the autumnal season. Bishop Fell.

§ Not that we pretend.] The agency of the priest in the forgiveness of sins, hath been already noted to be only ministerial; see note [that I may beseech God for you] in §. 15. of the case of the Lapsed. He had the dispensation of church-ordinances, which when regularly administered to fit and capable persons, opened the doors of heaven; and when duly withheld, shut up the same. Mere personal qualifications in the business of ordinances will not do, where the ordinances may be had; nor will the ordinances alone suffice without these qualifications. The person who is fit for baptism, &c. ought to resort to it; nor will such moral fitness, save him without such resort; any more than baptism alone would save him without such fitness.

§ The apostles.] If apostolical tradition could so easily be then mistaken; how much more easily may it be so now?

Ad. 250.
Ep. LXXV.

as these execrable heresies have taken rise since their times. For *Marcion* is known to have been the disciple of *Cerdon*, and to have introduced his blasphemous opinions against God; long after the age of the apostles; and so is *Apelles*, who grafted upon his blasphemy some farther articles; more repugnant to truth, and more injurious to our faith. *Valentinus* and *Basilides* are also known to have vented their pernicious errors against the church long after the apostolick times; and so, indeed, are the rest of the heretical tribe; all which are manifestly self-condemned, and have pronounced against themselves an irreversible sentence even before the day of judgment: He therefore who is for confirming their baptism judgeth in effect, his own case the same with theirs, and accordingly condemns himself by becoming a partaker with them.

S. 4.
The church of Rome is charged as too negligent in preserving tradition.

4. But now, that the *Romanists* are no exact observers of tradition; and have very little title to urge the authority of the apostles, a man may easily guess, who shall attend to their different manner of keeping *Easter*, with diverse other variations from the customs retained by the church of *Jerusalem*. As, indeed, among several other provinces there is a like diversity; but without any breach, upon such accounts, of the peace and unity of the catholick church. This breach of peace hath *Steven* adventured to make with you, which his predecessors all along maintained, in all fit expressions of love and honour to you; he hath moreover cast a reflection upon the memory of the blessed apostles *Peter* and *Paul*; as if he had derived his practice from a tradition delivered by them, who in their epistles have severally pronounced their censures upon hereticks, and admonished us to avoid them. From whence it is apparent, that this pretended tradition is merely human, which avoweth the cause of hereticks; and insisteth, that they have true baptism amongst them, which indeed belongeth to none, but to the church only.

S. 5.
A reason given, why hereticks do not baptize those who come over to them from a different sect of heresy.

5. As to that part of his letter, wherein *Steven* urgeth; that hereticks themselves agree in the point of baptism, and do not baptize those who come over from one sect of heresy to another, but receive them by communion only; intimating withal, that therefore we should do so too; I think your answer is very just and full: In which, tho' you have sufficiently proved it an absurdity to follow any in their errors, yet I venture to add, over and above, this farther observation; that it is no wonder hereticks should so act, who, tho' they may differ from each other in points of smaller consequence; yet agree in the main point of all, viz. in blaspheming the great creator, and in signing to themselves certain dreams and phantasms of an unknown God; and, accordingly, it is as natural for these men to agree in allowing their own vain baptisms, as it is for them to consent in rejecting the truth of God: Concerning whom, because it would be too tedious to recount all their wicked or impertinent opinions, let it suffice to say, thus much briefly. That they who

are Marcion, Cerdon, Apelles, Valentinus, and Basilides; all, lived in the 2d century, and some of them towards the end of it. Bp. Fell.

Self-condemned. He alludes, in all likelihood, to that passage in 1st Cor. 11. 22. where an heretick is said to be self-condemned, and which we have found our author often resorting to in his works.

Keeping Easter. Firmilian, as a bishop of Asia, was for observing Easter according to the Asianic manner, which professed to derive its authority from St. John; but yet he was not for breaking communion with those who did otherwise. He likewise hints at some other variations of less moment, such as might probably be the ante-paschal fast, and the fasts of Friday and Saturday; in which there was some diversity of practice; the memory of which is transmitted to us by Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, in b. 5. c. 22. Bp. Fell.

Church of Jerusalem. It is evident hence, that Firmilian thought that church much siter than the Roman, to be the fountain of all tradition; as she was in fact the mother church to all the rest.

Tradition is merely human. To which, therefore, in opposition to reasonings deduced from divine authority, Firmilian most plainly appears to have thought that no regard was due.

Agree. See note [properly hereticks] in epistle 74. 5. Certain dreams and phantasms. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Epiphanius, give us strange accounts of these phantasmic hereticks.

do not hold the truth, with regard to God the Father, cannot hold it with regard to the Son, or the Holy Ghost. And therefore they who are called *Cataphrygians*, and who set up for new prophets, have amongst them neither the Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost, of whom, if we ask what Christ they preach; they will give us for answer, that they preach him who sent the Spirit, which spake by *Montanus* and *Prisca*. Wherefore when we observe in them the spirit of error, and not of truth; we are sure that the persons, who vindicate their false prophecies against the christian faith, cannot have Christ amongst them. Nor can other hereticks, who have cut themselves off from the church of God, retain amongst them any authority, or any gift of God; inasmuch as all such authority, and all such gifts, are fixed in the church, where the elders preside, who have the power of baptizing, ordaining, and laying on of hands. For as it is not lawful for an heretick to ordain, or to lay on hands; so it is alike unlawful for him to baptize, or to perform any act of a spiritual and holy nature; inasmuch as he is quite a stranger to all divine and spiritual sanctity. All which, many of us, assembled together in *Iconium*, a city of *Phrygia*, from *Galatia*, *Cilicia*, and the places thereabouts, determined to maintain and abide by against the pretensions of hereticks, when a question had been started concerning them.

§ 6. Now since *Steven* and his adherents insist, that the remission of sins, and a new birth, may be derived from the baptism of hereticks, who yet, according to their confession, have not the Holy Ghost amongst them; I would beseech them to consider, that there can be no such thing as a spiritual birth, where the Spirit is not; and accordingly we find in the case of those who had received *John's* baptism, before the mission of the Holy Ghost by Christ our Lord; that the blessed apostle *St. Paul* baptized them again with the baptism of the Spirit, and so laid his hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. But now what an absurdity is it in us, when we find that *St. Paul* baptized his disciples, after the baptism of *John*, to demur upon baptizing those who come over to the church from heresy, after their profane and unlawful washing? Unless any man will suggest, that *St. Paul* was a person of less figure and authority, than the bishops of whom we now speak; and so they, indeed, may confer the Holy Ghost upon such hereticks as come over to the church by imposition of hands only; but *St. Paul* might not confer the Holy Ghost upon the persons who had received the baptism of *John*, by

A. D. 256.
Ep. LXXVI.

§. 6.
That Steven
by owning
that hereticks
could not give
the Holy Ghost,
must yield
that they
could not baptize
unto the
remission of
sins.

Acts 19. 3. 5.
St. Paul
baptized
them
again
with
the
baptism
of
the
Spirit
and
laid
his
hands
on
them
that
they
might
receive
the
Holy
Ghost.

[*Cataphrygians*.] The followers of *Montanus*, who most abounded in the country of *Phrygia*, and thence derived their name *Cataphrygians*. The heresy of these people was not so well known, when the synod of *Iconium* was held some years ago; and therefore their baptism were there rejected under the notion of being merely schismatical. But now it was well known what heresy they held, and how their great founder *Montanus* had the impudence to personate the Holy Ghost; and their error concerning the 3^d person in the blessed trinity, was censured here, as affecting the orthodox *Eusebius* in b. 3. c. 16. hath given a particular account of this *Heresiarch*, and recorded; tho', as he saith, only from report, the manner of his, and his prophetess, *Maximilla's* death, which was by hanging themselves.

[*Prisca*.] Alias *Priscilla*; who, with the forementioned *Maximilla*, were the two prophetesses of *Montanus*, by whom he uttered his prophecies, pretending (himself) to be the Holy Ghost; and thereby blaspheming the Son who sent the true Holy Ghost, and the Father, who sent the Son.

[*Elders*.] *Magistri*; Translated to be sure from the Greek *magister*. So *Ierulian* before had said *presbiteri probati quique seniori*, in *Apol. c. 39.* and that this was a character not of age but office, his words next following manifestly shew: *Honorem istum non praeio, sed testimonio adscribo.* That there were not presbyters, in the modern sense of the words, our author's known principles are abundant proofs; that these several offices flowed originally from the bishop, and from him descended to presbyters and deacons, hath appeared most evidently in the course of our author's works: And as this character of *seniores*, or *magistri* *nati*, related not to age, but office, is no wonder, that it was applied to the chief officers of all.

[*Iconium*.] *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, in his 3^d epistle of baptism, as represented to us by *Eusebius*, b. 7. c. 7. tells *Abdemon*, to whom he wrote, that the *Africans* were not the first introducers of baptizing hereticks; but that the bishops assembled at *Iconium* and *Synada* had long before determined the question.

[*St. Paul might not*.] This argument, *ab absurdo*, the reader, it is hoped, will easily conceive: *Steven* seemed to arrogate to himself a power of receiving hereticks, without re-baptizing them; when *St. Paul* would not receive into the christian religion persons baptized even by *John* the Baptist without the true christian baptism.

imposition

AKD 2263
Eph. LXXV.

§ 7.
That it is not
enough to bap-
tize in the
name of the
Father, Son,
and Holy
Ghost, if by
those words
other persons
are meant,
than are
meant in the
gospel.

1 Cor. 2. 6.

Mark 13. 8.

§ 8.
The story of a
woman pos-
sessed, admin-
istering bap-
tism.

imposition of hands only, without giving them at the same time the baptism of the church.

It is, moreover, a grievous mistake to alledge, that it is needless to enquire into the person of the baptizer, so long as the person baptized may obtain the grace of the ordinance merely by invocation of the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that this will sufficiently entitle him to that wisdom, which St. Paul hath asserted to be amongst them who are perfect. But now what truly wise or perfect man is there in the church, who believes, and will maintain, that the mere invocation of these names will avail to the remission of sins, and to a true baptismal sanctification? Since, indeed, they are then only significant and successful, when the baptizer hath the Holy Ghost, and when the baptism itself is not appointed without the authority of the Holy Ghost. But they go on, and add, that he, who is baptized out of the church, may yet be entitled to baptismal grace, in virtue of his own faith and good dispositions, which it is altogether ridiculous to imagine, since the dispositions are in this case faulty; and a wicked disposition can never draw down upon it self from heaven that sanctification, which belongeth only to the righteous; nor can the faith of these, who believe a lye, derive upon them the truth of proper believers. Thus our Lord hath declared expressly, that all are not heard who invoke his name, nor shall they obtain the grace they ask for by such invocation; *Many (saith he) shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.* Now there is really no difference, between a false prophet, and an heretick. For as the former deceived in the name of God and Christ, so doth the latter in the sacrament of baptism. Both depend upon a lye, for the success of their respective cheats.

8. Upon this occasion I would acquaint you with a certain matter of fact, which happened in these parts; and is nearly related to our present purpose. A little above twenty two years ago, just after the reign of the Emperor Alexander, diverse calamities beset the world in general, and christians had a more especial share of them; there were diverse earthquakes, which in a manner overcame all *Caesariensis* and *Phoenicia*, destroying whole cities, and swallowing them up; in such that a terrible persecution was hence raised against the christian name; and this coming suddenly upon our people, after a long enjoyment of peace, had the more terrible effects upon them, and put them to so much the greater confusion. *Serenianus* was at that time the governor of our province, who was a man of a fierce and persecuting spirit. When our people were in the midst of all this disturbance, flying up and down, here and there, for fear of the persecution, leaving their native country, and going over to other parts, (for they had liberty so to remove with safety, in regard the persecution was only local, and did not extend it self over the whole Empire,) whilst things stood thus, I say, with our people; a certain woman started up on the sudden, who, in her fits of enthusiasm, pretended to the gift of prophecy, and to be filled with the Holy Ghost: This woman was so far under the direction and power of the chiefs among *Satan's* host, that she deceived our brethren for a great while together; and having performed many strange and wonderful feats, she undertook at last

§ 9. The design of this, and the tenour of the argument used in it, should be well considered; therefore to this purpose note, that they have no hand in the same, who are not members of the church, as here said to be of great account; but then it should be observed, in what sense this is said. Forasmuch here insinuates that the mere invocation of names, (even of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) when the proper persons were not meant by them, had no efficacy, and that the proper persons been meant by those names, and had the whole transaction passed within the pale of the church; it doth not hence appear, that our author would have condemned any such baptism within the church. The person of the baptizer was thus far of moment, as he was, or was not, a member of the church: but indeed let baptism be administered by one, who is not a member of the church, and no question formed upon it, as to what passed without the church; the reader hath had the best information I could give him in my translation of the Council of Carthage.

PART II.

to bring on an earthquake: Not that the devil at last hath so much power over the elements, as to be able to produce any such event; but, being such a subtle and cunning spirit, he may sometimes foresee that there will be an earthquake; and then pretend that he will bring about, what he knows beforehand is otherwise to happen. With the help of these forgeries and bold pretences, he had so captivated the minds of our people, that they were ready to obey any of his orders; and as to the woman, I have mentioned, he made her go barefoot over frozen snow, in the midst of a very cold and frosty winter, without receiving any harm from it; she pretended moreover, that she was hasting to *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, from whence she would have had it believed that she came into our parts. Here she so far imposed upon a country presbyter, and a deacon, that they lay with her; which was soon after discovered. For one of our exorcists, a man of an approved character, and an exemplary life, was prevailed upon, by the importunity of diverse brethren, who stood fast in the faith, to appear against this wicked spirit, and to oppose and confute his pretensions; who, on the other hand, had been so cunning as to forget, a little before, that there would rise up an enemy, an unbeliever, against him, who would endeavour to tempt his people, and to seduce them from him. Yet did this exorcist, inspired with the grace of God, withstand him boldly, and prove upon him, that he, who was esteemed so holy, was really a vile and a wicked spirit. The woman, who, thro' the wiles and tricks of the devil, had enterprized many things to deceive our brethren, among other practices wherewith she had imposed upon them, frequently presumed to consecrate the bread, and therewith to celebrate the eucharist, and thus to offer sacrifice to our Lord, invoking his name after a manner which was by no means contemptible; and in the usual form wherein that mysterious rite is performed; she likewise baptized diverse persons, using the known and proper interrogatories; so that she seemed in no particular to differ from the rules and methods of the church. What then shall we say to this baptism, wherewith the wicked spirit baptized by the ministry of this woman? Will *Sievan* and his adherents approve it; because there was no defect as to the article of the Trinity, nor as to the known interrogatories of the church? Can it ever be believed, that the true and proper regeneration of baptism was in this case duly compleated, or the remission of sins obtained by it, where, tho' every thing was done as it should be in point of form, yet the whole was done by a devil? Unless the patrons of heretical baptisms will proceed so far as to affirm, that the devil himself may confer the grace of baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost! Without all peradventure the very same error, the same craft and fallacy of the devil reign amongst hereticks, who are totally destitute of the Holy Ghost. What a strange pretension is it then in *Sievan* to insist, that the holiness of Christ is with those persons who are baptized by hereticks? For if the apostle doth not grossly deceive us, when he saith, *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; then he who is baptized amongst them into Christ, hath put on Christ; and if he

Galat. 3. 27:

Judea and Jerusalem. By way of religious pilgrimage, *saith Bishop Hall*, which perhaps had hence its rise; and it so, it had a very inauspicious original.

To celebrate the eucharist. *Eucharistiam facere.* The word was technical, and had a known relation to sacrifices.

Usual form. *Non hoc sacramentum solius predicationis.* *Bigotus* saith it should be *procatinatio*. This was probably the very commemoration it self, which our Lord appointed to be made; and to which *St. Paul* alludes, where he saith, *To do shew the Lord's death*, in 1. Cor. 11. 26. *Justin Martyr* hath told us in his second apology, that bread, and a cup of wine and water, were brought to the president, he took them, and *saith up thanksgiving to the Father of the universe, thro' the name of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* *Bishop Hall*.

Known and proper interrogatories. See note [at the bottom of the page] in epistle 90, 45. 2; where attestation as here, is given to known offices and forms in divine worship.

Article of the Trinity. *Symbolum Trinitatis.* The baptism proceeded duly in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which three persons are here termed the Trinity.

been observed by you with a great deal of truth and justice; that the church, according to the *Song of songs*, is a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up, a delicious orchard of pomegranates. But now, how will it be possible for them who never entered into this garden, never saw this orchard which was planted by God the creator, to give to any the living water of saving baptism out of the fountain which is thus enclosed, and sealed up with the seal of God? Had ther yet, as the ark of Noah was a type of the christian church, which, when all the world besides, who were out of it, perished, saved none but those who were within it; so we are manifestly thence directed to discern from the unity of the church, as the apostle St. Peter hath well instructed us, saying, *Also shall baptism in the like manner save you*; therein hinting to us, that as they who were not with Noah in the ark, were so far from being cleansed with water, that they perished in the deluge of it; so also they who are not with Christ in his church, shall perish out of it, unless they be admitted upon their repentance to the one saving baptism of the church.

It will appear yet farther, how much and greatly the person is mistaken, who pretends that remission of sins may be obtained in the synagogue of hereticks; and thereby shews, that he doth not abide by the foundation of that one church which was established by Christ, once for all, upon a rock; when it is considered, that our Lord said to Peter, in the singular number, *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*; and that he is represented in the gospel, as breathing on his apostles only; and saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained*. Where we may observe, that the power of remitting sins was granted to the apostles, and to those churches which they, when sent forth by Christ, formed and founded; and to those bishops who succeeded them in a due and regular course of vicarious ordination. Under what other notion can we, therefore, consider these adversaries of the one catholic church whereof we are members, these enemies of ours, of us, I say, who are successors to the apostles; when they claim to themselves a priesthood, whereunto they have no title, and in consequence of their injurious pretension, erect a profane altar (under what other notion can we ask, consider them and their adherents) than under a like character to that of Corah, Dathan, and Abiron; and as abnoxious to the same heavy punishment, which they and their abettors suffered? And here I cannot but express my indignation at the manifest absurdity of Steven's conduct; that he who bears himself so high upon his station, and the rank and eminence of his bishoprick, who glories in his succession to the chair of Peter, upon whom the foundations of the church were laid, (that this man, I say) should be the person to introduce more rocks than that one, and to build other churches

A. D. 156.
Ep. LXXXVI
Song of Solomon c. 4. y.
12, 13.

9. 2.
That the church which is founded on a rock, was recommended to Peter as a symbol of its unity.

9. 11.
That the church which is founded on a rock, was recommended to Peter as a symbol of its unity.
Matt. 16. 19.
John 20. 22;
23.

Upon a rock.] *Super petram*. Our language will not exemplify the analogy which there is in Latin between a Rock and Peter. And yet a great deal of the personal privilege which was granted to Peter depends upon that analogy.

To Peter in the singular number.] *Soli Petro*. This is an argument used by our author for illustration; upon which Rigaltius well observes, that tho' our Lord said this first to Peter only; yet he did not say to him, *To thee only will I give the keys*, &c. And indeed, as our author proceeds in this very §. all the apostles had the like power soon granted them; and he argues as much from what was granted to the other apostles, and in them to their successors, as from what was granted to Peter. See what hath been noted in §. 9. of the unity of the church; note, saying unto Peter, *Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my church*. That bishops were successors to the apostles in the government of the church, and in the standing and ordinary parts of their office; See note [apostles were indeed bishops] in §. 2. ep. 3.

Did Firmilian believe the infallibility of his holiness, in or out of his office? I wot not! Here again, as in all the instances of this allusion from Peter to Petrus, our language loses of representing it in its proper light. Rigaltius saith well upon this, that there might be more Peter's than one, but not more Petras, i. e. more rocks. The rock could be but one; but there might be as many Peter's, as apostles, or bishops.

upon

A.D. 256.
EPIST. LXXV.

Rom. 10. 2.

S. 12.

That truth is
to be preferred
before custom.

upon new models, by making use of his authority to patronize the baptism of hereticks without doors: For all persons who are truly baptized, enter most certainly into the account of the church, as her members; so that whoever is for confirming their baptisms, must agree, that where so many baptized persons are, there also the church is; not considering, that by thus betraying and forsaking the unity of the church, he doth very much obscure and impair the truth and firmness of the christian rock. The apostle acknowledgeth of the Jews, that, notwithstanding all their ignorance and grievous sin, yet, they had a *zeal of God*: Whereas *Steven*, who is so related upon his succession to the chair of *Peter*, feels himself warmed with no degree of zeal against hereticks; but, instead of it, grants them a privilege of no small, indeed of the highest, importance, by asserting their power to wash off the filth of the old man in the sacrament of baptism; to pardon the deadly sins of his past conversation; to beget children unto God, thro' the heavenly regeneration; and, to renew them unto life eternal, thro' the sanctifying influences of that holy laver. Whoever is for indulging to hereticks these mighty privileges of the church, doth nothing less nor other than communicate with them, by claiming so much for them: After having gone so far with them, it will signify little to be scrupulous in going farther; but he may even proceed to join with them in prayer, and in assemblies for worship; may set up one common altar, and offer upon it one common sacrifice with them. But still it is insisted, that the name of Christ hath a great efficacy in this matter; so that whoever is baptized in the name of Christ, cannot but immediately obtain with it his grace: To which the answer is short and easy; that if a baptism, celebrated out of the church in the name of Christ, hath force enough to cleanse the person it is conferred upon; then, certainly, imposition of hands upon any person in the name of Christ, might be as available towards his receiving the Holy Ghost out of the church. And thus every other sacred action performed by hereticks, will, by degrees, be esteemed as valid and effectual, and for the same reason, because it is done in the name of Christ; as you have very well deduced this argument in your letter. The conclusion of all is therefore very just; that the name of Christ hath not its proper efficacy, but in the church only, to which alone he hath given the privilege of his heavenly grace.

12. In answer to the argument deduced from custom, which they seem fond of setting up in opposition to the truth; I would ask, whether any one can be so weak as to prefer custom before truth? Or to continue in a state of darkness, when he sees the light shining clear before him? Or to imagine, that the Jews can derive any excuse from the plea of their (undoubtedly) an-

All persons who are truly baptized, viz. so long as they maintain the privilege of their baptism, and do not forfeit it by some wilful sin; their baptism, if true and proper, enters them upon the muster-roll of Christ their captain; and even after desertion, by any heinous sin, they are received again, not by baptism, but penance. It is remembered still, that they once were duly entered, and so the same form of entrance is not repeated to them upon their return into their Master's service.

Forsaking the unity. This was *Vinnilian's* constitution of their conduct, who held, consequentially at least, that there were more churches than one; that there was a church amongst hereticks, as well as amongst catholics; which, not being the same with each other, must have made two churches.

Christian rock. Which was that illustrious confession of *Peter's*, recorded *Matt. 16. 18.* To join with them in prayer. The absurdity of all this turns upon the known discipline of the church in those ages. Thus, for instance, the apostolick canon forbids any person to join in family-prayer with a person excommunicated. And *Augustine* directs a clergyman to be deposed, who should join in prayer with hereticks: (The same) both the same by any clergyman, who should admit their baptism, or their service, as valid: So the council of *Ancyra*, can. 1. excommunicates any person who should communicate with one excommunicated: And the whole stream of ancient canons runs the same way. *Bishop* *Gregory* and his followers even I have said, have been accused of having been the authors of this error.

To the argument deduced from custom. Custom was pleaded by *Steven* and his adherents, viz. the custom of his particular church, which, though it had been cited from the apostolick canons, from ancient precedents in the *Eastern* church, and from the transactions in the synods of *Armenia* and *Antioch*, custom appears to have been rather against *Steven* than for him; tho' to pin down upon him the argument with the greater force, *Vinnilian* insists, that custom was not to be heard against the reason of the thing, and the proper merits of the cause depending.

11 PART II

cient customs, for neglecting the *new* methods of truth, and adhering to their *old* usages, when Christ, who is the truth, appeared amongst them? And this you *Africans* may very properly reply to *Steven*, that upon finding the truth, you forsook those errors, which had nothing but custom to support them. But indeed we join, in this argument, truth and custom together; and to the particular custom of the *Roman* church, we oppose both the reason of the thing, and custom too; as abiding by the rule, which was handed down to us, from the very beginnings of the church, by Christ and his apostles. For we do by no means remember any particular time from which this custom bears date, as having been all along observed by us; nor did we ever acknowledge more churches than one, nor allow of any baptism which was not celebrated in this one, holy church. But as a doubt was started concerning the baptism of those, who, tho' they joyned with the new prophets, yet, seemed to acknowledge the same Father and Son with us; we assembled in considerable numbers at *Iconium*, and there we debated this question at large; and upon the result of all, we confirmed the opinion, that all baptisms were to be rejected, which were celebrated out of the church.

13. It would be loss of time to make a laborious answer to what is urged on the behalf of hereticks, from these words of the apostle; *Whether in pretence, or in truth, let Christ be preached*; since it is manifest, that the apostle, in the passage where we find those words, had not in his view either hereticks, or their baptism; but alluded only to those of the brethren, who spoke, either *sincerely*, or *deceitfully*. Nor will it be needful upon this occasion to give a long detail of the apostle's argument; but it will be enough to read the epistle it self, and to take his meaning from his own words. What then, may it be objected, will become of those, who, upon forsaking their heresy, have been admitted into the church without her baptism? If they have already departed this life, the answer is, that they are to be ranked in the same class with our catechumens, who happen to dye before they can obtain baptism; * they have not published nor celebrated in vain the advantages of the true faith, to which they came over, upon forsaking their former error, altho' being prevented by death they have not been partakers of the initiatory ordinance, which should have completed their professions. But as for those, who yet are living; let them be baptized with the baptism of

A. D. 256.
Epist. LXXV.

§. 13.
The passage in
Phil. i. 8. ex-
plained.
Phil. i. 14, 16.

[*You forsook those errors.*] This argument proceeds upon admitting, that before the times of *Agrippina*, the *Africans* did allow of heretical baptisms. But in *Tertullian's* time it is most plain they did not. *Firmilian* however grants here to *Steven*, what *Steven* could not have proved. And if *Agrippina* did first introduce the custom of disallowing such baptisms; *Firmilian* insists, that they did well to follow it. Yet in the words which come after (*we join truth and custom together*) he rises higher, and will not allow *Steven* to engross the plea of custom.

[*A doubt was started.*] Had it been known, that these new prophets held any erroneous doctrine concerning the persons of the Father or the Son; their baptisms would have been rejected without any doubt of them. The doubt arose from hence, that these new prophets, who were the followers of *Montanus*, had not hitherto spoke out their opinions of the Holy Ghost; and so were considered as schismatics only; and yet even as such their baptisms were rejected by the synod of *Iconium*: The *Tark MSS.* faith, that they held the same Holy Ghost, as well as the same Father and Son with the orthodox.

[*Confirmed the opinion.*] He doth not say, they made any new decision, but only confirmed an old one.

[*Let Christ be preached.*] *Annunciatur*, which may admit an imperative construction; but in the original it is read indicatively, *anunciatur*. See this noted farther in §. 9. ep. 73.

[*They have not published, &c.*] The passage is very obscure. *Agrippina* suspects, that the last word of the preceding sentence ending with *habentur*; the copyers might leave out the word *habent*, which should have immediately followed. And then the present sentence should have run thus; *Habent, non modo dicunt, or dicunt, &c.* The catechumens enjoyed, as well as learn, or published, the advantages of the true faith; meaning those of them who dyed without baptism. The publication or celebration, refers to the frequent professions made by catechumens of their faith in Christ, during their continuance in the state preparatory for baptism; with this view, I have translated the passage, which in all MSS. and in our most learned editor stands thus: *Non modo dicunt, etiam manifestum, variis et fidei, ad quam valde stricte pervenerunt, et si consummationem gratia consecuti non sunt, morte praeveniunt.* For God may make what exceptions he pleases to his own rules, in matters of a positive and arbitrary nature.

[*For those who yet are living.*] If *Firmilian* meant this direction for such hereticks, as, upon their coming over to the church, had been admitted to communion without baptism, he carried the point a little farther, than the famous *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* did; who yet, in the main, was of his opinion. See the opinion of *Dionysius* in note [they will be ready to conclude] §. 13. ep. 37.

veral wants; you, truly, put by their purpose of obtaining that remission of A. D. 256.
 sins which is granted in baptism, by telling them that they are already baptized, Ep. LXXV.
 and so are already in possession of the privileges thereupon entailed: All this while you consider not, that their souls will be required at your hands in the day of judgment, for denying the waters of the church to those who were athirst for them, and for bringing death upon those who were desirous of entering upon the measures which would have led to life; yet, notwithstanding all this, you take upon you to be very angry.

16. But observe now with what rashness and folly you cast your reproaches upon persons, who contend against fallhood and wrong, for the right and truth: For which, I pray, of the two, hath most reason to be angry? He who patronizeth the enemies of God, or he who endeavoureth to maintain the truth in the unity of the Spirit, against such as would vindicate the enemies of God? But thus, indeed, it usually happens, that men of least knowledge have usually most wrath, which is really their resort, when their understanding fails them; so that the application of that passage in holy scripture is to no one more proper than to you; *An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgressions.* For how great are the dissensions and quarrels which you have stirred up throughout all the churches of the world? And how must you then *abound in transgressions*, when you have cut your self off from so many flocks of christians? * You have, indeed, cut off your self; therefore be not deceived.

17. For he is at last the schismatick, who apostatizes from communion with the unity of the church. Thus, whilst you think it in your power to excommunicate all the world, you have only separated your self from the communion of the whole christian church: Nor had the precepts, even of an apostle, sufficient weight with you, to keep you within the rules of truth and peace, tho' he hath recorded for your use the following exhortation; *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called; with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.* With what exactness now, and diligence, hath Steven observed these wholsom directions of the apostle, especially in the first article thereof, concerning *lowliness and meekness*? For what could be more meek and lowly, than his discord with so many bishops all over the christian world? Than his breach of the peace in diverse manners, now with his *Eastern* colleagues (wherewith we suppose you by this time acquainted) and then with you in the *South*? From whom he received legates with great long-suffering and meekness indeed, when he would not admit

* *You have, indeed, cut off your self.* He who denounced an injurious anathema upon another (saith bishop Fell) had it always returned upon himself. The sentence of excommunication had always its effect, either upon the person injuriously pronouncing it, or else upon the person against whom it was justly pronounced; so sure a prognostick was it of the future judgment, in one case or the other. The bishops of Rome have been most bold with these sentences. *Victor* began with the churches of *Asia*, in the *Easter* controversy, and *Steven* followed him in this affair of baptism; but though the church hath generally subscribed to their opinions in the substance of both questions; yet the generality of her writers have branded the conduct of these popes, with regard to the manner of their supporting them, and to the heat and fury wherewith they pronounced upon all who differed from them. But since every bishop claimed this power of excommunicating those whom he thought deserving such a sentence, and of separating from such of his brethren as walked disorderly, upon account of his interest in the whole episcopate; therefore, to prevent abuses in the exercise of this power, the 37th apostolick canon directed synods to be held in each province twice every year. *Steven* most plainly here abused his power, and most of the bishops in the christian world thought so; though the rigour of the times would not admit any great assembly of bishops to pronounce upon it their sentiments.

† *What could be more meek and lowly.* The reader, 'tis presumed, will easily discern the sarcasm of this irony.

‡ *Now with his Eastern colleagues.* Vix. the bishops of the *Greek* church. *Steven*, we see, laid about him, far and near, when neither *Africa* nor the *East* could escape his violence.

them

A. D. 256.
Epist. LXXV.

them to discourse a word with him, even in common conversation; and when, in his great and deep regard to the rules of love and charity, he directed all the members of his church, not to receive them into their houses, nor to afford them the common civilities due to strangers! This, forsooth, is keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to cut himself off from that unity, which the law of charity would have obliged him to maintain; to estrange himself in all points from his brethren, and, in the height of his furious obstinacy, to break in upon all the obligations of our most holy faith! Can there be one body and one Spirit, think we, with such a person, of whom it is very doubtful whether he hath one mind or no? So exceedingly wavering, unconstant, and unfettled is it! But as to his part in this affair, we will no longer dwell on it.

§. 18.
An answer to
the objection,
that since
there is but
one baptism,
it ought on all
hands to be
equally al-
lowed.
Ephes. 4. 5, 6.

§. 18. Rather let us turn our thoughts to that part of our question, which hath the greatest stress laid upon it: They, who insist that persons baptized by hereticks ought to be received by us, as persons who have obtained the grace of true baptism, tell us, that they and we have indeed the same baptism, and that there is really no difference between the one and the other. But what faith the apostle here? *One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.* If then our baptism be the same with that of hereticks; without all peradventure our faith must be so too; and if our faith be one and the same, with theirs; then have we one and the same Lord; and if we have one Lord; the consequence is plain and clear, that we are all one, and there is a perfect unity amongst us. Now if hereticks do really maintain this unity, which will admit of no division, nor separation; what do we contend for? Or why do we give them the name of hereticks, and not of christians? But since, in reality, hereticks and we have not one and the same God, nor Lord, nor church, nor faith, nor spirit, nor body; it is evident that hereticks and we cannot have one and the same baptism, who have, upon the matter, nothing in common with each other. Yet is *Steven* not ashamed of turning advocate for such men as these, nor of dividing his brethren, in aid and support of hereticks; nay, nor of calling *Cyprian, false christ, false prophet, and deceitful workman*? All which characters, his own conscience telling him, were deserved by himself; he hath first drawn out their lineaments; and, by a scribbling them falsely to another person, hath put us in mind that he was the true original, with whom they best suited. We all most heartily wish your welfare, even as we do our own; together with that of all the bishops in *Africa*, and of their whole clergy and people; that we may be all like-minded, thinking the same thing; and however distant from each other, in place and country, may find our selves united in all brotherly affection.

Matt. 24. 24.
2 Cor. 11. 13.

[Calling Cyprian false christ, &c.] We may guess how far the quarrel proceeded on *Steven's* part, when he could obtain of himself to use such expressions towards a bishop of our author's diffusive charity: And may observe moreover, that such an acrimony of spirit and of language, seldom fails of being retorted. Our author found a bishop of the *East* ready to avenge his quarrel with one of the *West*, who, himself, was situate in the *South*.



A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXVI.

EPISTLE LXXVI.

In this year there arose the eighth general persecution of christians, in the reign of the Emperor Valerian; which began with forbidding them to assemble; and on the 14th of September banished our author, under the proconsulship of Paternus, to Curubis. Mean while the president of Numidia proceeded with more severity against the christians within his jurisdiction, and condemned diverse of them to the mines; to whom our author, from the place of his banishment, wrote this epistle, in the pontificate of Xystus; whose predecessor Steven died, soon after the publication of the edict against christians; but whether he dyed a natural or violent death, is somewhat uncertain.

CYPRIAN to his brethren-bishops Nemefianus, Felix, Lucius, another Felix, Littens, Polianus, Victor, Jader, and Dativus; and to his fellow-presbyters and deacons, with the rest of his brethren in the mines, martyrs of God the Father Almighty, and of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and God, our preserver, wisheth everlasting life.

HE honours due to you, my dearest and most blessed brethren, might well have demanded of me, that I should have waited upon you in person, and hasted to your embraces; but that I also am in banishment for the confession of Christ's name, and confined to the limits of the place appointed for me; yet in such manner as I can, I give you my company; and tho' I am not at liberty to move towards you, nor therefore to approach you with my bodily presence; yet in heart and spirit I am with you, and my letter must perform the offices of my tongue, in expressing to you the joy of my soul for the glory of your virtues, and the share I reckon my self to have in it; tho' not by a participation of your sufferings, yet, by a communion of charity. It is impossible for me to be silent upon such an occasion, when I hear such gallant and glorious things of my nearest and dearest friends, whom the favourable providence of God hath been pleased to honour with such extraordinary vouchsafements; some of you having already attained the crown of martyrdom; whilst others stay yet behind in bonds, or in the mines, and, by the delay of their consummation, encourage our brethren to follow their example, and to aspire after like honours with them. Their slow and lingring torments, all, are articles in their favour, and each day of their continuance in

^a His brethren bishops.] The names of all these appear in the Council of Carthage. Nemefianus and the two Felix's, in suffr. 5. 12. 33. Lucius in suffr. 7. Littens in suffr. 82. Polianus in suffr. 13. Victor in suffr. 78. Jader in suffr. 45. and Dativus in suffr. 10. From the three different answers sent by these bishops, it should seem that they were separated from each other, and assigned to three different mines. Littens not appearing in any of these answers, it is very probable that he was dead at the date of them. Bishop Fell.

^b Confined to the limits.] He might not stir beyond the place appointed for his banishment.

^c Not by a participation.] This our author modestly declines, which was, at that time, the glory of christians; tho' he then was, himself, a confessor, and in banishment for the name of Christ.

A. D. 257. Ep. LXXVI. a state of punishment will entitle them to a distinct reward. That these things should happen to persons of your eminent proficiency in our holy religion, and that our Lord should prefer you to the very highest honours, I cannot wonder; since you have all along proceeded in one ^d uniform and regular course of faith and obedience; and the church hath ever found you peaceable and orderly members, diligent and faithful in the charge committed to you; careful always of the poor; vigorous, and constant, in defence of the truth; firm and strict in your observance of her discipline: And, to crown the example of your other virtues; by your present confession, and your sufferings for it, you encourage and lead on the rest of our brethren to martyrdom; and so the flock, by following its shepherds, and doing what it sees its bishops do before it, will be entitled with them to a like reward, as paying a like obedience to our common master.

§. 2. Different comforts applied to their different sorts of punishment. 2. As to the entrance you made upon your gallant confession by being beaten with clubs; it is a sort of punishment, which christians, of all men, should not hold in detestation: Their bodies, certainly, should not shrink at a club, who have all their hopes depending upon ^e wood: A servant of Christ therein discerns a figure of his salvation, who was once redeemed by wood unto life eternal, and now again, by wood, is preferred to the martyr's crown. Or again, what wonder is it, that ^f vessels of gold and silver should be awarded to a mine, which is the proper nursery of gold and silver; except only that the nature of mines is, in this instance, altered; and the ^g places which ordinarily give gold and silver, do, in your case, receive it. Farther yet, they have manacled your feet with fetters; and have bound with infamous chains those blessed limbs, which are the temples of God; but after all, they cannot reach your souls, tho' they may confine your bodies; nor can their iron tarnish or affect ^h your gold. That iron fits rather as an ornament, than a chain, upon persons devoted to God, and giving such illustrious proofs of their gallant virtue; nor should the feet of christians, which are fasten'd together with it, be considered as marked with infamy, but rather as receiving thence honours preparatory to the martyr's crown. Happy are the feet so bound, which are to be loosen'd again, not by the smith, but by our Lord and Saviour, which are moving forwards, mean while, in their blessed journey to paradise; which chuse their present confinement here, that hereafter they may enjoy an everlasting freedom with Christ Jesus; which are retarded, for a while, with irons and shackles; but will soon and speedily pursue their glorious course to their Lord and master! The malice and cruelty of your persecutors may detain you for a season here, in bonds and confinement; but you soon will leave this earth behind you, with all which is grievous and tormenting in it, and will exchange it for the kingdom of heaven. Your bodies, indeed, are not laid in the mines, upon quilts and feather-beds; but, instead of them, you have the refreshments and comforts of Christ to cherish them. You have nothing but the ground to receive your weary limbs, when tired with the labours of the preceding day; but surely you will account it no punishment to lie upon the ground

[^d Uniform and regular course.] They had never given into the intrigues of faction or schism, nor into any unreasonable relaxations of ecclesiastical discipline. This our author designed to say of them, as one eminent topick of commendation.

[^e Wood.] Viz. the cross of Christ, which is the great foundation of the christian's hope in God.

[^f Vessels of gold and silver.] Such he calls the bodies of the martyrs and confessors; which easily cleave up the whole allusion.

[^g Places which ordinarily give gold.] It was not, that these mines, in particular, afforded gold or silver; for Pliny in b. 4. hath told us, that Numidia produced nothing but marble; but it was sufficient to the propriety of our author's allusion, that gold and silver were the produce of mines in general. Bishop Fell.

[^h Your gold.] He had before called the bodies of these martyrs vessels of gold and silver; and here he touches again upon the same allusion.

[ⁱ Marked with infamy.] The circumstance was ignominious enough in it self, as befalling none but the vilest malefactors; but the cause of christians did, in their case, ennoble it.

with

with your master Christ. Your bodies are loathsome and nasty for want of ^{A. D. 257.} bathing; but your spirits are cleansed in the *inner* man, proportionably as the ^{Ep. LXXVI.} flesh of your *outer* suffers thro' dirt and filth. Your allowance of bread and provisions is poor and scanty; but *man doth not live by bread alone, but by* ^{Deut. 8. 3.} *the word of God*. You are in want of cloathing to keep out the cold; but he who hath put on Christ, is abundantly cloathed and adorned. The ^k hair of your head, when half of it is shaven, hath a dismal aspect; but since *the head of man* ^{I Cor. 11. 3.} *is Christ*; nothing can misbecome an head, renowned for its adherence to the name of Christ. How will all these deformities, which make such a shocking appearance in the eye of the *Gentile* world, be recompensed with honours proportionable to the disgrace! What a blessed exchange will be made of this short and transient punishment, for an exceeding eternal glory! When, as the apostle hath expressed it, *Our Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile* ^{Phil. 3. 20, 21.} *body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body!*

3. Nor can your faith, nor your religion, suffer even from that hard circumstance, that the priests of God have not amongst you the liberty, nor the opportunity ^{§. 3.} ^{He comforts the martyrs for their want of opportunity to offer.} to offer, and to celebrate the divine sacrifices; since indeed you make an *oblation* to God of a sacrifice exceedingly glorious, and precious in his sight, and which will go far towards obtaining for you the recompence of a reward in heaven; the holy scripture having declared expressly, that *the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit*; and that *a contrite and humbled heart he will not despise*. This sacrifice you now offer to God, nor do you cease from celebrating it day and night; being, your selves, the victims to God, and presenting your selves as such, according to the apostle's advice, who hath thus exhorted you; *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,* ^{Rom. 12. 1, 2.} *that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God: And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds; that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*. This now is, of all things, most acceptable to God; there is nothing we can do, which hath a stronger tendency to procure for us his favour, nor any thing more likely to be accepted by him as a proper return for his great and saving benefits; the Holy Spirit having sufficiently hinted thus much in the book of *Psalms*, where we thus read; *What shall I render* ^{Psal. 116. 12,} *unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of sal-* ^{13, 15.} *vation, and call upon the name of the Lord: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the righteous.*

4. Who now would not, with all readiness and alacrity, receive this cup of salvation? Who would not be fond of an occasion to make some return to his Lord and Master? Who would not receive that death with courage and constancy, which is precious in the sight of the Lord, and pleasing to such a spectator; who, looking down upon us in the midst of our struggle, and in the heat of our engagement for his name's sake, approves the ardor of our wills, assists the vigour of our earnest endeavours, crowns us when victorious, and, out of the abundance of his fatherly goodness, honoureth his own work, and recompenseth the virtues which himself hath wrought in us? Now that our success in this engagement is owing to his succour; that from him we derive the laurels of our victory, and thro' him over-power our ghostly enemy, our Lord himself hath declared in his gospel, saying; *But when they* ^{Matt. 10. 19,} *deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be* ^{20.} *given you in the same hour what ye shall speak: For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*. And again; *Settle* ^{Luke 21. 14,} ^{15.}

^k Hair of the head, when half of it is shaved.] Prisoners were thus served, that, if they should escape, they might be found out. Bp. Fell.

¹ To offer.] The whole office of the eucharist often took its name from the * oblation made in it. See note [celebrate the holy eucharist] in ep. 5. §. 2. from which it will appear, that the privilege of celebrating the eucharist was not denied to christians in the Decian persecution.

A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXVI.

if therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist. From which words a true believer may attain great confidence; as they, who forego their trust in God, may hence be instructed in the heinousness of their sin; that they do not believe in him, who hath promised his gracious assistance to such as confess him; that they do not, on the other hand, stand in fear of him, who hath threatened eternal punishment to such as deny him. All these things you, as faithful and courageous soldiers of Christ, have strongly inculcated upon our brethren; fulfilling in practice what you have recommended by precept; and therefore are entitled to be with the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; our Lord having promised such as you, to the following purpose; *Whoever shall do and teach men so, shall be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* Accordingly a great number of our lay brethren have followed your example, have confessed our Lord, and stand thence entitled to a crown with you; as being united to you in the bonds of an invincible charity, and not suffering themselves to be divided from their bishops, either in the mine, or in the prison: Nor are you without the company, even of tender virgins; who, to their reward of ^m sixty fold, have added a title to that of an hundred fold, and who move forwards to their crown with the doubled honour of virgins and martyrs. Even the courage of youth, and children, hath approved it self upon this occasion, beyond their age, and the glory of their confession hath surpassed their years; so that your blessed troop of martyrs hath each age and sex to adorn it.

Matt. 5. 19.

§. 5.
The joys of
martyrs a-
midst their
punishments
and torments.

§. 5. How strong, my beloved brethren, is now the sense of your happy victory! What noble thoughts are your minds possessed with? What triumphant sentiments fill your breasts! How exquisite is the pleasure of your reflections, upon this truly glorious occasion! How joyful must it be to you to consider, that each of you stand ^a in readiness to receive the promised recompence at the hands of God; that you are ^o secure of the issues of the last judgment; that your bodies are, indeed, confined to the mine, but your hearts are free, and in anticipation, at least, have made you Kings and princes; that Christ affords ^eth you his gracious presence, and rejoiceth at observing the fortitude and patience of his servants, who ^p follow his steps to their joy and crown? You live in a daily expectation of being dismissed to your proper home, to your heavenly habitation, where you are to receive the recompence of your sufferings for the sake of truth; and when you have quitted the darkness of this world, are to breath in the purest aether, to be admitted into the most radiant light, and to partake of a glory which will more than compensate for all your sufferings and conflicts here; according to what the apostle hath declared upon this subject, who reckoned, that the sufferings of the present season were not worthy to be compared with the glory which should be revealed in us! And now, as your prayers are more available for success, with heaven, I beg you would put them up with the more force and fervour, that God would be graciously pleased to perfect the confessions of us all, to rescue us together with you, out of the darkness and entanglements of this embarrassed world,

Rom. 8. 18.

^m Sixty fold.] In §. 11. of the *Habit of Virgins*, our author hath assigned this same proportion, between the reward of martyrs and virgins. And here, upon an union of both characters in the same persons, he supposes the sixty added to the hundred-fold.

^a In readiness to receive.] The privilege of martyrs in being admitted to the immediate possession of their reward, (or at least to a much higher share of it than others,) hath already been remarked upon diverse occasions; particularly in note the last but one [without suffering him to wait for it, from his death to his resurrection] in the *Exhortation to Martyrdom*.

^o Secure of the issues, &c.] This was another of the martyr's privileges, which hath been also noted; that whereas others, whatever they might hope for, were not absolutely secure of their part in the future judgment; they were perfectly so. Others did *ad veniam stare*; stood with some uneasiness of suspense and expectation, as to their pardon; but it was the martyr's privilege, *ad gloriam pervenire*.

^p Follow his steps.] In being persecuted, like Christ, by sufferings.

^q To perfect.] Viz. by martyrdom.

and to bring us in safety and glory to a better; that we, who have been hitherto united to each other in the bonds of peace and charity, and have jointly withstood the assaults of heresy, as well as the persecutions of the Gentiles, may rejoice together in the kingdom of heaven. My most blessed and beloved brethren, I heartily wish your welfare in the Lord, and beg your remembrance of me every where, and at all times. Once more farewell.

A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXVI.

* *Jointly withstood.*] The Numidian bishops were all along with our author, both in the case of the lapsed, and in the controversy about baptism.



EPISTLE LXXVII.

Ep. LXXVII.

This, with the two following epistles, contains the answers of the persons, to whom the foregoing letter was written; and their being thus distinct, makes it very credible, that the persons, who wrote them, were in three different mines.

Written to him in his banishment.

Nemesianus, Dativus, Felix, and Victor, to their brother Cyprian wish in our Lord everlasting health.



YOU always write in your letters, dearest Cyprian, agreeably to the occasion, with great weight and prudence; by reading which with care and diligence, the wicked may easily be reformed, and good men be confirmed and strengthened in our most holy faith; since by opening to us the hidden mysteries contained in the word of God, you cause us to grow and to improve in our religion, and at the same time you bring in converts from the Gentile world to the belief of it. The many excellent things inserted by you in your writings, have given us a lively representation of your person, when you were not aware of it; for certainly you exceed all mankind in the sublimity of your discourses, the powers of your eloquence, the wisdom of your councils, the invincibleness of your unaffected patience, the exuberance of your charity, the strictness and sanctity of your morals, the condescensions of your deportment, and the untainted integrity of your whole administration. You know, dear brother, how much it was always in our wishes, that you, our great teacher, and our friend, might attain, as you now, we find, have done, to the confessor's illustrious crown: You first instructed us, like a good and true teacher, what we should say to the president of our province, by pronouncing the words, your self, in the proconsul's court; thus, as it were, founding the charge to us, animating the soldiers of God for their ensuing encounter, and furnishing them with all proper armour for it: You first

§. 1.

* *President of our province.*] The province of Numidia was governed by a *president*, as its chief officer; but the province of Africa had a *proconsul* residing in its chief city of Carthage, which was an higher office and dignity. And before this *proconsul* (whose name was *Paternus*) our author solemnly confessed the name of Christ, and thereupon was banished, on the 14th day of September in this year, to *Cunubis*, a city situate in *Africa Zeugitana*, and in a desert, tho' otherwise no inconvenient place. Whether it were then an episcopal see, we know not; but afterwards we are sure it was. What the words of his confession were, his deacon *Pontius* passeth in silence, referring for them to the minutes of the court, which were then upon record, and might easily be referred to. N. B. He went into banishment on the very day of the month, whereupon, a year afterwards, he suffer'd martyrdom.

A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXVII.

made the onset, and overthrew the devil with the sword of the Spirit; you, likewise prevailed upon our brethren, by your persuasive discourses, to keep their ranks; so that they did in a manner surround their enemy, and hamstrung him so effectually, that he could not stir to hurt them. Believe us, dearest friend and brother, professing our full persuasions, that your excellent Spirit is as amply entitled, as any, to the reward of ^b an hundred fold; which flinched not from the first attack of the *Gentile* world, declined not banishment, was content to leave the city, and to take up its abode in a desert place; and, by furnishing many with the example of your confession, should in just construction be considered as the first which uttered the ^c martyrs words; since it hath excited very many to suffer martyrdom, by setting before them such an illustrious pattern; and thereby hath not only associated it self with those martyrs, who are just upon the point of leaving the world immediately, but hath commenced an heavenly and holy friendship with all who shall at any time hereafter become such. Wherefore, dearest *Cyprian*, all, who are here condemned with us, present you with their heartiest thanks, for refreshing their wearied spirits by your comfortable letter, and for easing the pains they felt from being beaten with clubs; for slackening ^d the straitness of their manacles and fetters; for restoring hair to their half-shaved heads; for striking light into the darkness of their prison; for smoothing to them the roughness of their mine, and for levelling the several hills in it; for regaling their nostrils with the fragrant of your flowers; and for rendering us all insensible of those noisom exhalations, which this Place abounds with. Your charge, and that of our dearest *Quirinus*, are, both, executed, by the persons with whom you entrusted them, viz. by *Herennianus* the subdeacon; and by the waiters *Lucanus*, *Maximus* and *Amantius*; and we thence are furnished with every thing which our bodily necessities demanded. Let us therefore assist one another, by our prayers, according to your exhortation, at the throne of grace; that God and Christ, and the whole choir of angels, may lend us their favourable succours, when we most shall want them. We heartily wish your welfare, our master and brother, and beg your remembrance of us. Recommend us to all with you. All here greet and love you, and long to see you.

^a *an hundred fold*, viz. the highest recompence, even that of martyrdom. See note [sixty fold] in §. 4. of the foregoing epistle.

^b *The martyr's words*, i. e. The words of his confession, though they did not bring actual martyrdom upon him; yet, so far as they excited others to it, and might have brought it upon himself; were to be considered and rewarded as honourably as if he had resisted even to the death.

^c *The straitness of their manacles*, i. e. Here they refer to those several circumstances in their sufferings, which our author before had mentioned in §. 2. of his letter to them; and they tell him, how each of them derived ease and comfort from his consolations.

^d *Quirinus*, This might probably be the person, to whom our author had inscribed his books of *Exhortation*; and who here joined with him in distributing to the necessities of these *Saints*.

^e *Our master and brother*, an appellation of honour, in regard to his distinguished merit; as well as of brotherhood, in regard to their common office.

You are more fit to direct, than we deserv'd to be directed; and we have more need of your voice to it, than you have of ours. We are more fit to be directed, than we deserv'd to be directed; and we have more need of your voice to it, than you have of ours.



A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXVIII.

EPISTLE LXXVIII.

Was written upon the same occasion with the foregoing letter, viz. in answer to our author's, N^o 76. Written to him in his banishment.

Lucius, and they who are with me, to our brother and colleague CYPRIAN, send health in the Lord.

WHilst we were triumphing and giving thanks to God for that happy occasion, which armed us for the encounter with our enemy, and made us at length victorious in it; we received, dear brother, the letter you sent us by your subdeacon *Herennianus*, and by your waiters *Lucanus* and *Amantius*; upon the perusal of which, the burden of our chains seemed lighter to us; we found comfort in the midst of our affliction, relief in our several necessities, and encouragement given us to endure such farther punishment as may yet remain behind for us, with fortitude and patience. Even before we were called to suffer any thing, we were excited by you to a noble emulation for it; you, indeed, was our guide and leader to the confession of Christ's name; and, by treading in your footsteps, and following the example of your confession, we hope to obtain a like reward with you. He, indeed, who is foremost in the race, is first entitled to the prize; and thus you, who have gone over this ground before us, have, from your auspicious beginnings, communicated to us all proper assistances for following you; therein demonstrating that unalterable affection wherewith you have always loved us; and moreover endeavouring, that we, who have ^b always kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, may now reap the benefit of our united prayers, and be entitled to the same crown of our united confession. But the crown of your confession will be considerably more signal, from the recompence of your ^c good works, which will be added to it, and from that abundant measure wherewith our Lord will repay you in the day of retribution: You have acted, indeed, like your self, and have given us a specimen of that frank and open heart, of which we have always had the happy experience; and, ^d according to the extent and compass of its large capacity, you have jointly, with us, returned your thanks to God, after a manner which you are more fit to utter, than we deservng to hear. The addition of your voice to it hath polished and adorned the subject, in which we were less conversant; and you have, moreover, confirmed us in our resolution to endure

Ephes. 4. 3.

^a This ground.] i. e. Confessed the name of Christ before their confessors confessed it. The words are somewhat obscure; but I have endeavoured to open their meaning, and to let in some light upon them. *Qui prior occupasti, de quo cepisti, inde hoc tibi communicasti.* The learned reader may try, if he pleases, to find out a better sense for them.

^b Always kept.] They seem here referring to the part they always took with our author in the controversy about baptism, and in the case of the *lapsed*, and of *Novatian*; from which topicks he had commended them in §. 1. of his letter to them; see note on it [*one uniform and regular course.*]

^c Good works.] The relief he sent to their bodily necessities is here touched upon with due acknowledgments.

^d According to the extent, &c.] Largeness of heart is taken for wisdom, 2 Kings 4. 29. and a great soul will utter it self in suitable and sublime expressions: Such the writers of this letter ascribe to our author, and modestly profess themselves not deservng enough to hear them.

A. D. 257.
Epistle
LXXVIII.

Gen. 8. 20.

these sufferings, which now we undergo, with patience, as being secure of our reward in heaven, and of a crown of martyrdom, and of the kingdom of God, according to the tenour of your letter, which we consider as prophetic, and as endited by a special assistance from the Spirit of God. All this, we are full of confidence, will be our portion, if you remember us in your prayers, as we trust you do, and as we remember you in ours. What you sent from *Quirinus*, and from your self, came safe to our hands; a sacrifice like *Noah's*, from ^cevery clean thing. As he sacrificed, and made his oblations to God, who was pleased therewith, and smelt a sweet savour, and had respect unto his sacrifice; so, may the same God have respect unto yours also, and be pleased to give you the recompence of so good a work! I beg you would take care of transmitting to *Quirinus* the letter we have sent him upon this occasion. I heartily wish your welfare, dearest brother, and beg your remembrance of us. Greet all who are with you in our name. Farewel.

^c Every clean thing.] *Ex omni opera mundo.* Instead of *πᾶσαν τὴν κτίσιν* which is the reading of the LXX; bishop *Fell* conjectures, that our author read it, *ἀπὸ πάντων κτίσεων* from the whole creation.



Ep. LXXIX.

EPISTLE LXXIX.

Written to
him in his
banishment.

The occasion of this was the same, with that of the two foregoing letters.

Felix, Jader, and Polianus, with the presbyters, and all the people confined to the mine of Siguia, to their dearest and most beloved Cyprian wish everlasting health in the Lord.

S. I.

WE take the opportunity, dearest brother, of returning your kind salutation of us, by the same messengers, who brought it; *viz.* *Herenianus* the subdeacon, and our brethren, *Lucanus* and *Maximus*; who, thro' the assistance of your prayers, have behaved themselves with ^cgreat courage, and are yet in a state of safety. From them we received the contributions you sent us ^dunder the notion of an offering, together with your letter; in which you have been pleased to treat us like your children, and to comfort us from the word of God: We have given, and do give, continual thanks to Almighty God the Father, thro' his Christ, for the comfort and encouragement we have received from your address to us; beseeching you, agreeably to your usual good nature, always to remember us in your prayers; that our Lord would be

^a Of Siguia.] I follow here the conjecture of *Holsenius*, who reads our author's *Metallum Siguense*, *Siguiense*, or *Siguitense*, so making it to derive its name from *Siguia*, an episcopal see in *Numidia*; and I conceive it more probable (with our most learned *annalist*) than the fancy of *Barenus*, who would have it *Sigense*, as belonging to that *Siga*, where he imagines that *Strabo* had said there were mines of brass. For this *Siga* was in *Mauritania*; whereas our scene is now in *Numidia*.

^b *Maximus*.] He is here specified, tho' omitted in the former letter; and *Amantius* is here left out, who is there inserted. It is probable that they might not all three find opportunity of going to each mine; but they went, as they could best with safety; and so one or two might go to one; and one or two to another.

^c Great courage.] Their employment to these confessors was dangerous, and required all their courage.

^d Under the notion of an offering.] It being for the service of God, and the interest of his religion.

pleased

pleased to complete both yours and our confession, wherewith he hath vouchsafed to honour us. Let all with you know, that we remember them with the utmost kindness. We wish you, dearest brother, all possible health in the Lord. I Felix wrote this; I Fader subscribed it; and I Polianus read it. I salute my master Eutybianus.

A. D. 257.
Ep. LXXIX.

^c To complete. Viz. by martyrdom.
^d My master Eutybianus. Whether this was the same with that Eutyches a bishop, present at the second council of Carthage, and setting his name, as such, to the synodical letter, No. 57. or who else he was, is uncertain. As to the appellation of honour here given him of my master; see note [my master and brother] at the conclusion of ep. 77. This Eutybianus, the plain, accompanied our author in his banishment.



EPISTLE LXXX.

A. D. 258.
Epist. LXXX.

Although Valerian, in the main, had been all along a person of an extraordinary character, and in the reign of the Decii had received most ample testimonies of it from the senate, when he was constituted censor by that august assembly; yet, upon his expedition against the Persians, appointing for his general one Macrianus, who was a great enemy to the christians, himself became thence a most inveterate enemy, who before had been a friend to them. Accordingly, when he was upon that expedition, he sent orders to Rome, for pushing the persecution against them with new warmth; and Xystus, Steven's successor, a peaceable and excellent prelate, who carried every thing with more temper than his predecessor, suffer'd in it, upon Sunday the sixth day of August, whilst he was performing divine service. When our author had been about eleven months in banishment, where his goods were not confiscated, nor his person maltreated; Maximus, the successor of the proconsul Paternus, who had banished him, recalled him from Curubis, and ordered him to remain in his own gardens, that he might the better come at him upon any occasion. Mean while our author sent messengers to Rome, that he might know with certainty what had passed there; and upon their return, he immediately transmitted to his colleague Successus, the intelligence he had thence received, which is contained in this letter.

Written after
his return
from banishment.

CYPRIAN to his brother Successus sendeth greeting.

THE reason why I could not write sooner to you, my dearest brother, was this, that all my clergy being in the very article of their confession, none of them could stir hence, but stood all prepared, with great resolution and devotion of mind, to receive their heavenly crown. But now I give you to understand, that

§. 1.

^a Successus. We have diverse bishops of this name occurring in our author's epistles; which of them in particular this was, we cannot with any certainty determine. One is particularly named of Abbir Germaniciana, a city of Africa Zeugiana, in Africa. No. 16. Coun. Carth.

^b All my clergy. All letters were to be dispatched by clergy from church to church; and they being otherwise engaged, our author had none to send. See note [to take the bearers out of my clergy] in epist. 29.

^c In the very article of their confession. Sub ictu agonis. Expecting, upon their confession, their last great struggle, from the hand of the executioner.

Epist. LXXX.
A. D. 258.

the messengers I have dispatched to *Rome*, to bring me certain intelligence of whatever orders or edicts have been published against us; are returned hither. There is a great variety of uncertain reports and opinions; but the truth of the case stands thus; that ^a*Valerian* hath sent an order to the senate, importing, "that bishops, priests, and deacons should forthwith suffer; but that senators, persons of quality, and *Roman* knights, should forfeit their honours, should have their estates confiscated, and, if they still persevered in the christian religion, should lose their heads: That matrons should have their goods seized, and be banished; that any of *Cæsar's* officers, or domesticks, who had either already confessed the christian religion, or should now confess it, should forfeit their estates to the exchequer, and should be sent in chains to work in ^c*Cæsar's* farms. To this order the Emperor *Valerian* subjoined a copy of the letters which he hath dispatched to the presidents of the several provinces concerning us; which letters, I expect, and hope, will ^b soon be brought hither, resolving, through the merciful assistance of our Lord, to undergo such sufferings as shall fall to my lot, with a firmness becoming our holy faith; and thence humbly expecting the crown of everlasting life. You are to understand, that *Xystus* suffered in ^d a coemetry upon the sixth day of *August*, and ^e*Quartus* with him. The ^f officers of *Rome*, you are to know, moreover, are very intent upon this persecution; and so the persons, who are brought before them, are sure to suffer, and to forfeit their estates to the exchequer. I beg you would take care of notifying these several particulars to my colleagues; that so our brethren may every where be encouraged and prepared for their great spiritual conflict; that we may all think rather of immortality than of death; may, with a faith and constancy, devoted entirely to the service of your master, derive more of joy, than of fear or terror, from this confession, in which we know that the soldiers of Christ, are not so properly killed as crowned. My dearest brother, I always wish your welfare.

^a *Valerian*.] It hath already been observed, that this *Valerian* was once a great favourer of christians, but by the persuasions of *Macrianus*, a great favourer of the *Magi*, and his general in the *Persian* expedition, he was turned against them; and was afterwards betrayed to the *Persians* by this very *Macrianus*: The *Persian* Emperor (we are told) made use of him (*Valerian*) as an horseclock, and mounted from his back. Afterwards *Aurelius* slew *Macrianus*, and *Odenatus*, of *Palmyra*, rooted out the remains of his wretched Family.

^b *Sent an order*.] This is called *rescriptum* sometimes, and sometimes *oratio*; which implied any proposal made by the Emperor to the senate, in order to its becoming a law.

^c *Forthwith suffer*.] Some had a day set them to come in, and in the interim might consider of it; but the *suffering forthwith* implied more severity. *Rigaltius*.

^d *Cæsar's farms*.] 'Tis well enough known (saith bishop *Fell*) among the writers of the *Cæsarean* law, what sort of servitude that was, which the *Adscripti* *Glebe* were under. Now the MS. of *Verona* reading our author's *descripti*, & *scripti*, leaves room for a conjecture, that it might have been written originally *adscripti*.

^e *Soon be brought hither*.] These letters not being yet arrived at *Carthage*, was the reason why christianity was not yet a capital offence there.

^f *A coemetry*.] These were places little resorted to, and therefore made use of by christians in times of difficulty, for their worship. Here they met, notwithstanding that *Valerian* had forbidden them, and so, for example's sake, they were hunted out, and suffered upon the spot.

^g *Quartus*.] This, it should seem, must have been a presbyter, probably enough assistant at that time to *Xystus* in the celebration of divine worship. He must have been one of his clergy, or else he could not have suffered upon the spot, by the tenour of *Valerian's* edict.

^h *Officers of Rome*.] He saith in general, *Præfetti Urbis*; but otherwise we know it was the appropriate office of the city-præfets, to hinder unlawful assemblies. Bp. *Fell*.



A. D. 258.
Ep. LXXXI.

EPISTLE LXXXI.

The proconsul Maximus having made a progress from Carthage to Utica, which was a secondary kind of proconsular seat; there received the letter of Valerian concerning the treatment of christians; whereupon he sent his officers, called Frumentarii, for our author, to bring him to Utica, out of the gardens to which he had been commanded. But our author thinking it improper for a bishop of his eminence to suffer out of his own city, whereby his church would lose the honour of such a martyr, and his people the advantages of his example, retired for a while, till the proconsul should return, then resolving to meet him, and to take his fate; which he did, and was accordingly beheaded upon the 14th day of September. Mean while he sent this letter to his clergy and people, to give them an account of his designs and circumstances; that none of them might suspect his purposes, as if he would decline the trial; to which, however, he was much, tho' in vain, persuaded.

CYPRIAN to his presbyters and deacons, and to all his people,
sendeth greeting.

WHEN I had received intelligence, my dearest brethren, that the purveyors of corn were sent to bring me in custody to Utica, and when I was advised by the persuasion of my friends to retire for a season out of my gardens; I hearkned to them upon a very just and necessary reason; viz. because it is most congruous for a bishop, to confess our Lord in that city, where he presides over the flock of Christ; and for all his people, to be honoured with the confession of their president before their faces. Since whatever a bishop, who is a confessor, speaks in the very article of his confession, should be considered as spoken, through the assistance of God, by the common mouth of all his people. But now the honour of this illustrious church will be maimed and injured, if

^a Officers called Frumentarii.] These were a sort of spies, sent from the court, to see what was doing up and down the country; their pretence was to buy up corn, and to store the publick magazines with it. It was very proper, therefore, for the proconsul, in his country expedition, to employ these officers; but upon his return to Carthage he made use of his (Statores) ordinary messengers, purfivants, or serjeants. Bp. Fell.

^b Purveyors of corn.] These were the Officers called Frumentarii.

^c My gardens.] These he had sold upon his conversion to christianity; but either by the persons, to whom he had sold them, restoring them, or by some other means, he was now again in possession of them.

^d Common mouth.] As he presided in the offices of solemn worship, he was a common mouth to his people; and he seems alluding to this in the present argument, that he should be to them, in the article of his confession, what he had so long been to them, in the times of worship. Thus in his 60th epistle he had told Cornelius, that his confession was in the name of his whole church. *Omnis Ecclesia Romana Confessa est.*

^e Will be maimed.] Martyrs were considered as honours to the several churches in which they suffered; and accordingly their memorials were solemnly celebrated on the days of their respective martyrdoms; of which, as well as of the practice declining into superstition, due notice hath been taken in the course of this work. Two churches were afterwards dedicated to our author's memory, which were held, as his memory was, in special veneration by the people of Carthage.

A. D. 258.
Epi. LXXXI.

I, who am ^f in some sense a bishop of more churches than one, should, upon my confession of Christ's name, receive my sentence at *Utica*, and should go thence a martyr to our Lord; and indeed I pray, as I ought, instantly and continually, that I may confess and suffer, both for my self and you, and go to our Lord directly from my own people. Wherefore I wait in this place of retirement, for the return of the proconsul to *Carthage*, to hear from him the orders given by our Emperors, concerning both our laity and bishops. As for you, my brethren, I beg you would keep quiet, according to the rules of the gospel, upon which you have so often heard me preaching; and that none of you would raise any tumult, or commit any disorders, upon the case of our suffering brethren; ^h nor offer your selves to the Gentiles; but when any of you are taken, and delivered up to the secular powers; then speak, and be assured, that it is our Lord which speaketh in you at that hour; who would rather have our *confession*, when he calls us to it, than our needless *professions*, when he calls us not. For the rest; what rules we shall observe, or what measures we shall take, before the proconsul passeth sentence upon me, when I shall confess the name of my Lord and Master; we will determine together in a common consultation. May it please our Lord Christ to continue you, my dearest brethren, safe in his church, and to keep you in his holy protection.

Matt. 10. 20.

^f In some sense a bishop of more churches than one.] *Viz.* As he was metropolitan; of which in the 48th epistle himself takes notice, that his province had *Numidia*, and the two *Mauritania's* joined to it. So that if he suffered any where in his own province, where he was considered as a kind of bishop to the place he suffered in, that place would claim the honour of his martyrdom. *Ego Episcopus alterius Ecclesie prepositus.* The words are somewhat obscure, but I have given them the sense which I think intended by them; and I find my construction of them supported by the authority of our most learned editor.

^g Raise any tumult.] He advises a patient submission to the most injurious treatment; without insults upon the government, howsoever provoked to it.

^h Nor offer your selves.] The notion of martyrdom was carried so far, that many coveted it; and, in their transport, would expose themselves to it, unnecessarily. But this was leading themselves into temptation, and accordingly stands here condemned by our author; who, when the proconsul demanded of him to discover the rest of his collegues, answered; That it was unsuitable to the laws of God and man, so to expose them; but that they would be found in their respective cities.



The E N D.



T H E
O R D E R
Of the several
TRACTS and EPISTLES
Which compose the ensuing
W O R K.

P A R T I.

P reface	Of the Unity of the Church	p. 95
Life	Of the Case of the Lapsed	p. 113
To Donatus, Of the	Of the Lord's Prayer	p. 137
Grace of God page 1	Of the Plague	p. 155
Of the Vanity of Idols	An Exhortation to Martyrdom	p. 167
p. 11	The Tract to Demetrian	p. 185
Testimonies against the Jews in three	Of Alms and good Works	p. 199
books addressed to Quirinus.	Of the Advantages of Patience	p. 214
1. Book	Of Emulation and Envy	p. 227
2. Book	The Council of Carthage	p. 236
3. Book	A Dissertation upon it by the Tran-	p. 256
Of the Habit of Virgins	slator	

P A R T II.

Containing the EPISTLES, whose several Inscriptions here follow.

C yprian	gy of Carthage	p. 20
I. — To the Church at Fur-	IX. Cyprian to the Presbyters and	
nis	Deacons of Rome	p. 23
II. — To Eucherius	X. — To the Martyrs and Confessors	p. 24
p. 4	XI. — To his Presbyters and Deacons	p. 28
III. — To Rogatianus	XII. — To the same	p. 33
p. 6	XIII. — To Rogatianus the Presbyter	p. 35
IV. — To Pomponius	XIV. — To his Presbyters and Dea-	p. 38
p. 9	cons	
V. — To his Presbyters and Deacons	XV. — To the Martyrs and Confessors	p. 41
p. 13		
VI. — To Sergius, Rogatianus, &c.		
p. 15		
VII. — To his Presbyters and Deacons		
p. 18		
VIII. The Clergy of Rome to the Cler-		

- XVI. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons* p. 44
- XVII. — *To his Lay Brethren* p. 47
- XVIII. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons* p. 49
- XIX. — *To the same* p. 51
- XX. — *To the Presbyters and Deacons of Rome* p. 53
- XXI. Celerinus to Lucianus p. 56
- XXII. Lucianus to Celerinus p. 59
- XXIII. *The whole body of Confessors to Pope Cyprian* p. 61
- XXIV. Caldonius to Cyprian p. 62
- XXV. Cyprian's Answer p. 63
- XXVI. Cyprian to his Presbyters and Deacons p. 64
- XXVII. — *To the Presbyters and Deacons of Rome* p. 65
- XXVIII. — *To Moses and Maximus &c.* p. 67
- XXIX. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons* p. 69
- XXX. *The Presbyters and Deacons of Rome to Pope Cyprian* p. 70
- XXXI. Moses and Maximus to Pope Cyprian p. 75
- XXXII. Cyprian to his Presbyters and Deacons p. 86
- XXXIII. — *To the Lapsed* p. 81
- XXXIV. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons* p. 83
- XXXV. — *To the Presbyters and Deacons of Rome* p. 85
- XXXVI. *The Presbyters and Deacons of Rome to Pope Cyprian* p. 86
- XXXVII. Cyprian to Moses, Maximus, &c. p. 89
- XXXVIII. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons and to all his people* p. 92
- XXXIX. — *To the same* p. 94
- XL. — *To the same* p. 97
- XLI. — *To Caldonius and Herculanus &c.* p. 98
- XLII. Caldonius and Herculanus &c. to Cyprian p. 100
- XLIII. Cyprian to all his People p. 101
- XLIV. — *To his Brother Cornelius* p. 107
- XLV. — *To the same* p. 108
- XLVI. — *To his Brethren Maximus and Nicollas &c.* p. 110
- XLVII. — *To his Brother Cornelius* p. 112
- XLVIII. — *To the same* p. 113
- XLIX. Cornelius to his Brother Cyprian p. 115
- L. *The same to the same* p. 118
- LI. Cyprian to his Brother Cornelius p. 119
- LII. — *To the same* p. 121
- LIII. Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius and Macarius to their Bro. Cyprian p. 124
- LIV. Cyprian to Maximus &c. p. 125
- LV. — *To his Brother Antonian* p. 127
- LVI. — *To his Brethren. Fortunatus, Ahymnius, Optatus, &c.* p. 143
- LVII. Cyprian, Liberalis, Caldonius, &c. to Cornelius their Brother p. 145
- LVIII. Cyprian to the People dwelling at Thibaris p. 149
- LIX. — *To his Brother Cornelius* p. 156
- LX. — *To the same* p. 170
- LXI. Cyprian, with his Collegues, to his Brother Lucius p. 173
- LXII. — *To his Brethren Januarius, Maximus, Proculus, &c.* p. 176
- LXIII. — *To his Brother Cæcilius* p. 178
- LXIV. Cyprian and the rest of his Collegues (in number 66) to their Brother Fidus p. 188
- LXV. Cyprian to his Brother Epictetus and to the people of Affuri p. 191
- LXVI. Cyprian (aliàs Thascius) to his Brother Florentius (aliàs Pupianus) p. 195
- LXVII. Cyprian, Cæcilius, Primus, &c. to their Brethren, the Presbyter Felix, the people of Lepito and Asturica, the Deacon Lælius, and the people of Emerita p. 201
- LXVIII. Cyprian to his Bro. Steven p. 207
- LXIX. — *To his Son Magnus* p. 211
- LXX. Cyprian, Liberalis, Caldonius, &c. to their Brethren Januarius, Saturninus, Maximus, &c. p. 221
- LXXI. Cyprian to his Bro. Quintus p. 225
- LXXII. Cyprian, and the rest, to their Brother Steven p. 228
- LXXIII. Cyprian to his Brother Jubainus p. 231
- LXXIV. — *To his Bro. Pompeius* p. 244
- LXXV. Firmilian to Cyprian p. 251
- LXXVI. Cyprian to his Brethren-Bishops Nemefianus, Felix, Lucius, &c. and to his fellow Presbyters and Deacons with the rest of the Martyrs, &c. p. 265
- LXXVII. Nemefianus, Dativus, Felix, &c. to their Brother Cyprian p. 269
- LXXVIII. Lucius, &c. to our Brother and Colleague Cyprian p. 271
- LXXIX. Felix, Jader, &c. to Cyprian p. 272
- LXXX. Cyprian to his Brother Succellus p. 273
- LXXXI. — *To his Presbyters and Deacons, and to all his people* p. 275

A N

Alphabetical TABLE

O F T H E

P R I N C I P A L M A T T E R S

Contained in the

WORKS of St. *CYPRIAN*,

And in the *NOTES* upon him.

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
A Absolution; nature and form of it	11	133	15	k
— First instance of it without penance	2	47	1	d
— Restoration to the peace of the church, even when private; and in some cases this office might be performed by a deacon	2	49	1	c
— Remitted not guilt, but only penitential punishment	2	58	1	h
— How obtained, and what implied in it	2	104	3	r, s
— An external privilege, the final result of which was left to God	2	117	2	k
— Agency of the priest in it conditional and ministerial; and the qualifications of the person (absolved) contributed most to the good or ill success of it	2	135	10	e
— In what cases denied, or granted	2	137	12 & 13	b, c
— No otherwise binding upon God, than as he discerned the sincerity of the persons dispositions	2	142	17	e
— Relative to church censures	2	146	1	c
— Ditto	2	234	5	v
— Valid, when irregularly granted	2	188—9	1	—
— Authoritative part in it originally the Bishop's	2	189	1	d
Altar against altar, the quintessence of schism; see schism	2	212	1	c
Ambition, its exorbitances	1	8	10	—
<i>Anthropian</i> hereticks, who	2	233	4	1
<i>Apelletian</i> hereticks, who	2	233	4	1
Apocryphal writings in what esteem, and how differing from canonical	1	26	20	b
— Ditto	1	27	4	o
— Ditto	1	27	6	e
— Ditto	1	139	3	g
— Ditto	1	151	20	p
— Ditto	1	167	17	q
— Ditto	1	200	1	e
— Ditto	1	202	4	—

Arch-

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE

	Part	Page	Seft.	Note
Archbishops; see Metropolitans	2	9	1	c
— Ditto	2	109	1	f
— Ditto	2	114	2	d
Arians, injurious to the Nicene fathers, in reflecting upon their interpretation of <i>Pfal.</i> 45. 1. when it was interpreted in the same manner by the <i>Antenicene</i>	1	30	3	g
B				
Baptism; great effects of it	1	3	3	d
— Renunciations used at it	1	86	5	m
— Useless without a good life after it	1	212	18	h
— Trine immersion used at it	1	241	10	c
— Sins committed before it how forgiven	1	200	1	d
— Reserved to the bishop	1	169	—	f
— By Blood	1	169	—	e, g, h, i
— Given for the remission of sins	1	217	4	m
— Infants	1	119	6	s
— Ditto	2	189	2	f
— Attended with regeneration, and the cure of all preceding guilt	2	190	4	l, m
— By sprinkling	2	217	8	c
— Clinical, or upon the bed of sickness, <i>ibid.</i> and	2	22	3	m
— In the name of Jesus Christ only; a distinction upon it	2	239	9	q
— Out of the church, whether valid, or no, turned much upon the regularity of the form	2	215	4	u
— Persons most favourable to such baptisms insisted, that they should be solemnly confirmed by the bishop	2	217	7	b
— Faith of giver and receiver very material to the validity of such baptisms	2	218	9	g
— Ditto	2	233	4	n
— Ditto	2	236	6	e
— Ditto	2	241	12	y
— The dispute concerning their validity, matter of discipline, in which prudential reasons took place	1	237	—	e
— Ditto	2	221	10	x
— Ditto	2	230	2	i, k
— Ditto	2	242	13	b, c
— Ditto	2	243	14	e
— Ditto	2	247	2	m
Bishops distinct from presbyters	1	98	4	f
— Ditto even when the name was common	2	19	—	d
— Seated sometimes in villages, but chiefly and generally in cities	1	244	22	s
— Their mediation, or intercession with God	1	132	14	f
— Ditto	1	133	15	k
— Ditto	1	202	4	k, l
— Successors to the apostles	1	254	79	s
— Ditto	2	8	2	l
— Ditto	2	81	1	c
— Ditto	2	197	3	m
— Ditto	2	259	11	k
— Diocesan and metropolitical, with their rules of government	2	179	1	c
— Manner of their correspondence, and their mutual notification of each others, accession to their respective dignities	2	129	2, & 4	h, m
— Ditto	2	109	2	i
— Usually preached in their respective cathedrals	2	202	10	d
— But one at a time in a diocesan church with diverse congregations	2	151	2	g
	2	54	1	f

Even

Of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS, &c.

	Part.	Page	Sect.	Note.
— Even in such a church as <i>Rome</i>	2	108	1	d
— This Diocese very large, and the number of christians under them very great	2	177	3	c
— The principle of unity to their people	2	104	3	p
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	108	1	c
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	111	—	c
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	112	—	e
— Equal to each other	1	237	1	f
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	70	1	c
— Their power in baptism and confirmation	2	217	7	b
— Their authority in ordinations	2	94	1	a
— <i>Ditto</i> in deprivations	2	6	1	b
— <i>Ditto</i> in suspensions	2	46	2	n
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	99	—	e
— In censures and relaxations how far mixed with the people's	2	40	4	l
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	47	—	c
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	52	—	b
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	73	7	r, s
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	166, 7	10, 11	t, u
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	189	1	d
— Nothing to be done without them in the church	2	44	1	c
— All directions to be received by their clergy from them in ecclesiastical matters	2	51	—	a
— Their authority extended over their presbyters and deacons	2	54	1	g
— Acknowledged by confessors even when most irregular	2	60	—	f
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	61	—	b
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	64	—	a
— Their college governed the catholick church, and not any single bishop	2	209	2	m
— People's part in their election	2	203	2	m
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	204	2, 3	o, p
— People's part in their deprivation	2	118	—	c
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	202	2	i
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	203	2	l
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	206	4	e
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	209	2	n
— Their election, when canonical, ratified by God	2	130	5	n
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	159	5	n
— The steps usually previous to it	2	130	5	o
— The several parties concerned in it	2	130	5	s
— The consent of the episcopal college necessary to ratify it	2	158	5	m
— This a rule to the people in litigated cases, to point out their proper bishop to them	2	131	5	t
— How far they had the cognisance of each other's conduct	2	197	3	o
— How far held essential to the being of a church	2	197	3	q
— For what causes, and how deprivable	2	139	14	i
— Burial, how solicitous the ancients were about it	2	22	3	n
— Of the <i>Gentiles</i> attended with great superstitions	2	205	3	y
C				
Canticles applied to Christ and his church	1	246	33	k
— <i>Ditto</i>	2	212	1	g
Cardinals; a vain pretence of <i>Pamelius</i> concerning them	2	116	1	d
<i>Cataphrygians</i>	2	255	5	s
Catechumens, hearers, and several sorts of them	2	50	—	c

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE

	Part	Page	Seet.	Note
<i>Cerdon</i> who	2	246	1	f
Certificates, purchased in excuse of sacrificing	2	71	3	g, h
Charity, its advantages	1	49	1	—
Chriſm, consecrated	2	223	3	c, f
Chriſt; the angel who appeared to the patriarchs, and very God	1	31	5	l
— Ditto	1	65	33	f
— Again God	1	32	6	q
— Ditto	1	33	6	w
— Was to be born, as a man	1	34	8	—
— And of a virgin	1	35	9	—
— And to be God and man	1	35	10	—
— And to come from the ſeed of <i>David</i>	1	36	11	—
— And to be born in <i>Bethlehem</i>	1	36	12	—
— And to be crucified by the <i>Jews</i>	1	42	20	—
— And to judge the world	1	45	28	—
— Whether created, from <i>Prov. 8. 22.</i>	1	29	1	a
— No access to the Father but by him	1	45	27	—
— The God of christians, and to be adored	1	226	16, 17	l, m, n
— The doctrine of his ſatisfaction for the ſins of the world	1	217	4	k
Church, her cenſures ratified by God	2	118	—	a
— Ditto	2	156	1	d
— Her peace and the pardon of God, were underſtood to go together	2	104	3	s
Church ceremonies, added to Chriſt's inſtitutions	2	178	1	a
— Alterable	2	184	5, 6	z, b
Church one	1	98	4	g
— Ditto	2	210	3	o, t
— Rule of her unity	2	114	2	c
— Breach of it, hereſy	2	116	1	b
— Her unity an article of faith, generally acknowledged	2	125	1	r
— Breaking it was fatal	2	112	—	e
— No ſalvation out of her	1	98	1	i
— None would leave her, but ſuch as were to periſh	2	123	2	n
— What was done by man in her, according to her rules, was confirmed by God	2	114	2	g
Church catholic, any particular church ſometimes ſo called	2	112	—	a
— Ditto	2	117—120	1	i, f
— What conſtituted any particular church, or what were its organical parts	2	91	1	e
— Ditto	2	174	1	te, g
— Whether ſhe can pardon the moſt heinous ſins	1	63	28	—
— In what ſenſe the <i>Montaniſts</i> and <i>Novatians</i> held the negative to this	1	47	—	b
— Patriarchal and chriſtian the ſame church	1	106	20	u
— Chriſtian and <i>Jewiſh</i> nearly reſembling each other	2	212	1	—
— The ſame, the chriſtian ſucceeding upon the ſite of the former diſſolution	2	21	1	f
— Correſpondence of one church with another how managed — by ſecret tokens	2	24	—	g
— Letters ſent from one church to another ſent to the Biſhop	3	109	1	c
— And conveyed by clergymen	2	161	7	De
— Members of any particular church, as well as diſſenters, how united to each other	1	111	10	—
— Communion between diſſent churches how maintained	2	109	2	—
— Church revenues how diſpoſed of	1	117	4	m
— Ditto	2	14	1	c
— Her				— Her

of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS, &c.

	Part	Page	Sect	Note
Her constitution settled by divine authority	2	139	14	g
Clergy; not to be segregated and deposed too, in ordinary cases	2	11	3	m
Yet in extraordinary cases of heinous guilt might be so	2	188	1	c
Their distinction from the laity	2	20	1	a
Their several orders	2	20	1	b
Their peculiar designation to their office by the bishop	2	19	—	c
Their great numbers	2	14	2	f
Ditto	2	20	1	b
All ecclesiastical correspondences carried on by them	2	61	—	e
Ditto	2	69	—	a
Their authority	2	40	3	k
Honours of their office	2	94	1	e
Age to qualify them for the lowest order of it	2	96	2	q
Those of the lower order how maintained	2	99	—	c
Confession; publick and penitential	1	130	13	z
Voluntary	1	131	14	e
Confessors, difference between them and martyrs	2	24	1	a
Diverse sorts of them; who the florid	2	56	—	b
Again red and florid	2	100	—	b
Their dignity in the church	2	124	—	a
Irregular in their demands of peace for the lapsed	2	28	1	b
Confirmation	2	223	3	e
Ditto	2	234	5	q, r
Ditto	2	235	6	x, y
Consistory ecclesiastical, form of its session	2	109	1	g
Courts of judicature (Gentile) their enormity	1	7	9	—
Creed, remission of sins an article in it	2	215	4	w
The most ancient form of any extant	2	222	1	d
Cross, sign of it	1	40	1	u
Ditto	1	44	1	—
Ditto	1	44	2	—
Ditto	1	109	1	s
Ditto	1	109	2	b
Ditto	2	109	6	—
Ditto	2	111	1	k
Cup in the holy eucharist, granted to the laity	2	146	1	c
Ditto	2	149	1	c
Ditto	2	149	1	b
Ditto	2	179	1	r
Mingled with water	2	179	1	e
Ditto	2	180	1	k
Ditto	2	182	1	s
D				
Demons expelled out of human bodies	1	4	4	h
Ditto	1	109	1	l
Their nature, employment, and subjection to christians	1	14	1	—
Their fall	1	80	1	s
Ditto	1	109	1	—
Dead, state of them	1	156	1	—
Ditto	1	156	1	l
Ditto	1	156	1	—
Ditto	1	156	1	—
Commemorations of them at the holy eucharist	2	3	1	n
These yearly	2	109	1	—
Ditto, with sacrifices and oblations	2	99	1	g
Their concern for their friends left behind them	2	109	1	—

Deacen

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
Deacon, in what case he might absolve or give the peace of the church	2	49	—	c
His proper office	2	121	1	b
Dipping at baptism, no absurdity from the word; which was equivocal, and was translated alike, either dipt or sprinkled	1	47	30	b
Ditto	2	187	8	o
Ditto	2	217	8	c
Diptychs, what	2	3	2	n
Ditto	2	33	2	c
Discipline penitential, its process	1	123	10	d
Ditto	2	42	1	d
Course and design of it	2	32	8	o
Expedient, tho' not necessary that it should be every where the same	2	63	—	c
Its character	1	82	1	a
Ditto	2	123	2	i
They who most insisted on the rigour of it, did it from no uncharitable principle	2	242	13	b
Ducenarian procurator, who	2	205	3	a
E				
Easter, festival continued till Whitsuntide	2	57	—	f
How kept	2	254	4	n
Ecclesiasticus, Solomon its author	1	50	1	d
Ditto	1	58	12	—
Ditto	1	66	35	—
Ditto	1	69	51	—
Episcopate, single	1	98	4	f
Ditto	2	139	14	f
Episcopacy of divine institution	2	81	1	d
Ditto	2	139	14	g
Eucharist typified in Mal. i. 10, 11	1	24	16	w
Received by infants (see infants)	1	129	13	x
Carried out of the church, and kept at home by the communicants	1	129	13	y
Daily received	1	145	12	y
Ditto	2	14	2	f
Ditto	2	149	1	c
Its elements provided by the people	1	204	6	n
Delivered by the deacon into the hands of the people, but without any formal, or solemn elevation, much less procession	1	221	8	z
Ditto	2	154	6	r
The terms used for it sacrificial	1	238	1	k
Ditto	2	257	8	a
Oblations at it for, and memorials of, departed church-members	2	3	2	n
Oblations at it for all church-members, whether dead or living	2	14	—	c
Ditto	2	42	—	c
At what times of the day administer'd	2	185	6, 7	d, c, f, g
Excommunication, for what sins, and how terrible the sentence	1	145	12	z, a
Several degrees of it	2	12	3, 4	n, o, r
Had always its effect, upon the person it was pronounced against, or else upon the injurious person	2	263	16	c
Persons excommunicated not to be joined with in prayer	2	260	11	q
Exorcism, miraculous	1	4	4	h
Ditto				

Of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS, &c.

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
<i>Ditto</i>	1	192	9	—
Preliminary to baptism	2	220	10	q, s
F				
Faith, its articles reducible to facts	1	97	3	—
Faithful, a technical term, signifying persons baptized	2	62	—	c
Families, private, the wickedness of them in the <i>Gentile</i> world	1	7	8	—
Fathers, <i>Antenicene</i> , one great and common error of them	2	175	—	—
Forms in divine worship	1	86	5	m
<i>Ditto</i>	1	138	3	d
<i>Ditto</i>	1	151	19	o
<i>Ditto</i>	1	243	18	n
<i>Ditto</i>	2	105	3	u
<i>Ditto</i>	2	222	2	d
<i>Ditto</i>	2	257	8	b, c
G				
Gladiators, their horrid entertainments among the <i>Gentiles</i>	1	5	6	—
God, his Unity acknowledged by <i>Heathens</i>	1	15	5	—
<i>Ditto</i>	2	250	52	m
Grace, baptismal, the vast improvements from it	1	3	3	—
Gratuities on God's part	1	10	13	p
Inward upon the heart of man	1	143—4	8, 10	s, u
Its concurrence with man	2	73	6	q
H				
Hearers, who	2	50	—	e
<i>Hebrews</i> , epistle to them not St. <i>Paul's</i>	1	179	11	s
Heresy, usual rise of it	2	8	3	—
Hereticks, their baptism whether valid or no, see under baptism				
Great difficulty of receiving them, where their baptisms were allowed as valid	1	240	5	q
I				
<i>Iconium</i> , synod held there	2	255	5	w
Idolatry, scarce pardonable even upon penance in the infancy of the church	1	63	28	x
No rule for its pardon so early	2	22	2	k
Capital under the old law, a remarkable, false, inference thence drawn by <i>Pamelius</i>	1	173	5	y
<i>Jews</i> , how received their proselytes	1	141	5	n
Imposition of hands upon penitents at receiving them to penance	1	241	8	z
And at absolution, as well as each publick prayer for them	2	245	1	d
Infants (see eucharist) admitted to the eucharist	1	146	12	b
Their uncleanness for nine days after their birth a <i>Gentile</i> superstition	2	190	2, 3	k
<i>Job</i> his antiquity	2	252	2	f
Judgment, day of it mistaken (see fathers <i>Antenicene</i>)	1	166	19	r
<i>Ditto</i>	2	187	8	p
To take up a thousand years	2	200	7	o

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
L				
Laity, what their part in synods, especially in restoration of offenders to the peace of the church	2	73	7	s
— Ditto	2	78	4	k
— What in procuring the absolution of penitents	2	104	3	r, s
— This even in synods	2	116	2	g
— In testimonials to clergymen	2	107	—	c
— In synodical censures	2	116	2	g
— In nominations and deprivations of bishops	2	202, 3, 4	2, 3	will, m, o, p
Lapsed, several ways of incurring that guilt	1	130	14	b
— Ditto	2	71	2	g
Latin, vulgar	1	229	3	e
Lay-baptism	2	256	7	y
Lay-communication, clergy how awarded to it	2	121	1	a
— Ditto	2	123	2	m
— Ditto	2	132	6	c
Liberty of human agents	2	160	6	x
M				
Magistracy, not unlawful to christians	1	3	3	f
Man, his natural impotence and insufficiency	1	53	4	n
— His ministry confirmed by God	2	102	1	d
Martin, his erroneous tenets	2	233	3	g, o
— Ditto	2	236	6	e
Martyrs, what prevalence in their merits, &c.	1	125	11, 12	h, i
— What their privileges	1	169	—	h, k
— Ditto	1	183	12	d
— Ditto	1	184	12	h
— Ditto, with their prerogative	2	42	1	b
— Ditto	2	46	2	l
— Ditto	2	49	—	b
— Ditto, whence arising	2	57	—	c
— Ditto, how limited	2	65	1	b
— Difference between martyrs and confessors	2	24	1	a
— To be assessor with Christ in the judgment of the world	2	76	2	c
— Honours and ornaments to their respective churches	2	275	—	e
— Claimed undue privileges	2	61	—	a
Martyrdom supplied all defect of ordinances	2	147	4	h
— Irregular in persons to expose themselves needlessly	2	276	—	h
Masses, solitary unknown to the ancients	1	138	3	c
Meals, religious exercises used at them	1	11	13	r
Metropolitans, the rise of their power; see Archbishops	2	80	—	a
— St. Cyprian one of these	2	276	—	f
Miracles, continued in the church; see visions	1	128	13	—
N				
Net-fencer	2	30	4	h
Night, prayers used in the midst of it	2	89	1	a
Noah's precepts, how anciently understood	1	81	11	i
Non-resistance to legal powers	1	93	10	m
— Ditto	2	276	—	g
Novatians, how far their rigours extended	2	47	—	b
— Ditto	2	140	16	—
— Two sorts of them	2	141	16, 17	r, s
Novatus, a large account of him	2	122	—	—

of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS, &c.

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
O				
Oblation, eucharistical, what, and in whose disposal	1	206	1 F	s
— To offer, was to celebrate the holy eucharist	2	14	2	c
— Ditto	2	267	3	l
Ophites, who	2	233	4	m
Ordain, none but a bishop could do it	2	222	2	g
Orders, candidates for them	2	69	—	c
Ordinances, the Spirit of God limited to them, where they might be had	2	147	4	k
— How, or upon what terms, necessary	2	253	2	i
Ordinations, the authoritative part in them, the bishops; the people only bore testimony	2	92	1	a
P				
Parabolani, who, and what their office	2	39	2	d
Paradise, the receptacle of good men after death	1	198	16	c
— The place whence Adam fell, and to which good men after death are restored	1	210	16	c
— Ditto	1	213	20	i
Patristians, who	2	233	4	h
Paul, St. his epistles seven	1	179	11	s
Pelagians, refuted	1	53	4	n
Penance, the several degrees and stations of it	2	12	3	m, o, q, r
— Ditto	2	145	1	b
— The whole discipline delineated	2	42	1	d
— Clinical, sick, or death-bed, the hope of it	2	75	8	v
Penitents prostrate	2	105	3	w
— Difficulty of their restoration to the peace of the church	2	106	4	a
Peter, the analogy between his name and a rock	1	179	11	t
— Ditto	2	259	11	h, i, m
— His primacy, what colour for, or against, it	1	97	3	d
— Ditto	2	228	2	g
— Ditto	2	218	1	b
— Ditto	2	234	5	s
— Ditto	2	236	6	b
Piety, the only way to happiness	1	10	13	—
Player, a scandalous profession	2	4	—	b
Pope, the title common to all bishops	2	20	1	c
Prayer, Lord's, a directory, as well as form	1	137	2	b
Preaching, whilst the church was unsettled	2	237	8	l
Presbyters, their part in synods	2	9	1	d
— Ditto	2	225	1	c
— What in the ecclesiastical consistory	2	166	10	r
— What their part in the absence of their bishop	2	13	1	a
— Had their deacons, each one, to attend them in their ministrations	2	14	2	f
— Ditto	2	83	1	b
— Their numbers great in each Diocese	2	83	1	b
— Teaching and non-teaching	2	69	—	d
— Had a larger proportion of maintenance than the lower clergy	2	96	2	o
— Translated from one church to another	2	97	—	b
— A majority of them could do nothing against their bishop	2	110	2	k
— Directing letters to them a sort of disowning their bishop's character	2	113	1	b
— Might marry	2	123	2	h
— Had a portion of the episcopal power, but not that of ordination	2	174	—	f

— Were

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE

	Part	Page	Seft	Note
— Were mediators, or intercessors, with God for their people	2	192	1	c
— Ditto	2	202	2	—
— A character of office, not of age	2	255	5	v
Prophets not always the justest interpreters of their own visions	2	148	4	n
Punishment, future, to be eternal	1	196	14	—
Purgatory, no such thing	1	156	2	a
— Ditto	1	161	10	l
— Ditto	1	166	20	t
— Ditto	1	197	16	x
— Ditto	2	136	11	z
R				
Reader, what his office in the ancient church	2	93	2	c
Repentance, in what sense never too late	1	198	16	a
— Too late after death	1	216	2	g
— Death-bed, how esteemed	2	138	13	—
— No encouragement to it from the example of the chief upon the cross	2	241	12	z
— Outward and inward duty	2	103	2	h
— Bishop's part in it	2	103	2	i
Resistance, condemned (see non-resistance)	2	151	2	h
— Ditto	2	171	11	c
Riches, their vanity	1	9	11	—
Rome, her bishop only equal to him of Carthage	2	23	—	a
— Ditto	2	53	1	a
— Ditto	2	107	—	a
— Ditto	2	111	—	a
— Ditto	2	120	—	g
— Ditto	2	170	1	a
— Ditto	2	208	1	c
— Her greatness, to what owing	2	122	2	h
— What claims she had from being the see of Peter	2	165	10	o
— What power in appeals	2	165	10	q
— No more originally than the see of Carthage	2	201	—	a
— Reason and measure of this power	2	204	3	r, s
— Her Bishop not infallible	2	244	1	a
— Ditto	2	259	11	l
— Succession of her first bishops how reckoned	2	246	1	g
S				
Sacerdotal character not deleted by personal faults	2	158	4	k
Sacrament, a word of great latitude	2	157	2	f
— Ditto	2	224	5	k
Sacrifices, what under the gospel	2	89	1	b
— Ditto	2	175	—	k
— Ditto	2	199	7	z
Saints, days kept in honour of them	2	33	2	n
— Ditto	2	33	2	c
— Ditto	2	34	2	d
— No invocation of them	1	94	14	c
Satisfaction, in what sense made by sinners	1	122	10	z
— Ditto	1	123	10	d
— Ditto	1	125	11	g
— Ditto	1	197	16	v
— Ditto	2	43	2	h
Schism, where no doctrinal error was maintained	2	138	14	e
— Ditto	2	245	4	—
— All ministerial acts performed in it insignificant	2	193	3	h
— Ditto	—	—	—	—

Of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS, &c.

	Part	Page	Sect.	Note
<i>Ditto</i>	2	104	3	m
Danger of it	2	12	4	—
Rise of it	2	8	3	—
<i>Ditto</i>	2	158	5	—
Contagion of it	2	206	4	c, d
Heinouness of its guilt	1	105	12	b
Implied herefy in it	2	125	1	a
Consisted in a separation of the people from their proper bishop	2	199	6	—
<i>Ditto</i> ; see also against altar	2	214	3	—
Scriptures, permitted to lay-men	1	10	13	q
<i>Ditto</i>	1	19	—	b
How quoted by the fathers in proof of any point	1	30	3	h
<i>Ditto</i>	1	39	16	—
<i>Ditto</i>	1	42	19	—
<i>Ditto</i>	1	52	1	g
Mytical interpretation of them	1	145	10, 11	—
<i>Ditto</i>	2	179	2	f
Separation, state of it	1	131	14	f
<i>Ditto</i>	1	161	10	—
<i>Ditto</i>	1	166	20	t
<i>Ditto</i>	1	169	—	g, k
<i>Ditto</i>	1	184	12	h
<i>Ditto</i>	1	194	13	p
<i>Ditto</i>	1	197	16	—
Seven, a mytical number	1	178	14	q
Seventy interpreters, of what authority in the christian church	1	239	5	p
Sins, original	1	70	34	—
<i>Ditto</i>	1	199	1	—
<i>Ditto</i>	1	212	10	d
<i>Ditto</i>	2	190	4	e
Sins, how ranged, as to their several degrees	1	172	4	e
<i>Ditto</i>	1	221	9	—
<i>Ditto</i>	2	44	1	d
<i>Ditto</i>	1	123	3	l
None but God could properly forgive them	1	124	11	—
Yet there were known ways of obtaining from God the forgiveness of them	1	200	1	b
Spirit, fruits of it;	1	4	4	—
Stationary days, or assemblies, what	2	107	—	b
<i>Ditto</i>	2	117	2	l
Strangled things, in what sense the prohibition of eating them understood	1	81	119	l
Succession of bishops, how important, and well known	2	81	1	c
<i>Ditto</i>	2	213	2	m
Suspension à beneficio	2	84	2	f
Synods held twice in a year ordinarily	2	144	—	f, l
<i>Ditto</i>	2	253	2	i
Form of their session	2	109	1	g
T				
Temples, in what sense discommended	1	15	5	k
Theatres, their corruption	1	6	7	—
Tithe	1	111	20	t
<i>Ditto</i>	2	193	2	f
Tradition, scripture opposed to it	2	245	1	c
<i>Ditto</i>	2	250	8	w
Easily and early mistaken, in matters of small moment	2	253	3	k
Transubstantiation, against it	2	184	5	y

An ALPHABETICAL TABLE, &c.

	Part	Page	Se&	Note.
Trinity, three one 1 John 5. 7.	1	99	5	k
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	152	21	v
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	246	29	c
<i>— Ditto</i>	2	257	8	d
U				
Valentinians	2	233	4	k
Vail, superstitious	1	115	2	d
Virginity, how commended	1	65	32	d
<i>— How professed</i>	1	83, 4	3	g i
<i>— Ditto</i>	2	12	3	P
Virgins living in the same house with the clergy, how censured	2	10	1	k
Visions, miraculous, see miracles	1	163	14	n
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	164	17	—
<i>— Ditto</i>	2	19	—	b
<i>— Ditto</i>	2	31	7	l
<i>— Ditto</i>	2	46	2	m
Wary, how condemned	1	68	48	s
W				
Waiter, what officer in the Church	2	19	—	c
War, not absolutely unlawful	1	5	5	i
Whitsuntide, white garments used in that season by the persons then newly baptized, see <i>Easter</i>	1	206	10	P
Will, its liberty, and how far each man's salvation depended on his own free choice	1	69	52	x
Witnesses, what their part in judicial cases	1	173	5	v
World, its age mistaken	1	168	—	b
<i>— Its end mistaken</i>	1	16	6	n
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	106	14	h
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	166	19	r
<i>— Ditto</i>	1	186	2	a
Reasons why a delay of it was desired	1	162	10	m
Worship, daily in publick	2	96	1	l
The bishop the common mouth in it	2	275	—	d

A TABLE OF THE TEXTS of SCRIPTURE Cited by St. CYPRIAN in this Book.

Note that the letters a and b after the pages denote the first or second part of the book.

GENESIS			GENESIS			EXODUS			EXODUS		
Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.
1	2	239 a	11, 12			62 a	13	196 a	20		32 a
	4	249 a	12			59 a	46	77 a	25	37	26 a
	26	89 a	24	4		73 a	46	213 b	28	43	192 b
	27	248 b	25	23		25 a	13	32 a		43	202 b
	28	93 a		33		243 b	14	174 a		43	229 b
2	7	248 b	27	27, &c.		26 a		32 a	31	32, 33	19 a
3	14	121 a		41		229 a		219 b	32	1	19 a
	14, 15	35 a	28	5		219 a	15	234 a		6	72 a
	16	64 a		12, &c.		40 a	16	219 b		11	219 a
	16	92 a	29	17		25 a	17	43 a		31, &c.	126 a
	17, &c.	71 a	30	23		25 a		40 a		31, &c.	172 a
	17, &c.	219 a	31	11, 13		32 a		175 a	LEVITICUS		
4	2, &c.	219 a	32	6		157 b	19	44 a	7	19, 20	123 a
	5	104 a	35	1		32 a		65 a		20	77 a
	8	229 a	37	11		229 a		79 a	10	1, 2	108 a
	8	16 b		19, 20		200 b		192 b		1, 2	235 b
	8	157 b		27		219 a		202 b	19	2	223 b
5	24	71 a		28		157 b		229 b		18	37 b
	24	165 a	38	14		66 a	20	171 a		23	76 a
8	20	272 b	43	23		219 a		187 a		27	76 a
9	21, &c.	179 b	48	17, &c.		26 a		72 a		27	117 a
	21	183 b	49	8, &c.		26 a		171 a		27	132 a
12	1, 2, 3	26 a		8, &c.		181 b		58 a		32	76 a
14	18	180 b		10		181 b		140 b	20	7	142 a
15	6	21 a	EXODUS					72 a	21	17	192 b
	6	67 a	1	12		176 a	22	118 a		17	202 b
	6	180 b	2	18, 19		101 a		172 a		21	235 b
16	25	25 a	3	2		79 a		193 a	24	13, 14	58 a
19	24	65 a		2, 3		42 a		163 b	NUMBERS		
	26	31 b	4	11		176 a		192 b	8	5, 6, 7	218 b
21	2	25 a	12	3, 4, &c.		39 a		80 a	12	3	134 b
22	1, &c.	160 a		6		186 b		58 a	16	1	6 b
	1, &c.	219 a		11		56 a		7 b		1	7 b
	11, 12	31 a		13		44 a	23	38 a		26	203 b

NUMBERS

A TABLE of the TEXTS

NUMBERS		JOSHUA		2 CHRON.		PSALMS	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
26	216 b	1 8	245 b	26 18, 19	108 a	30 3	44 a
31, &c.	107 a	2 18, 19	213 b	EZRA		10	80 a
31, &c.	235 b	18, 19	101 a	10 44	73 a	33 6	30 a
32	6 b	5 2	22 a	NEHEMIAH	34	1	58 a
37	7 b	13, &c.	41 a	26	20 a	8, 9, 10	28 a
40	216 b	24 26, 27	39 a	JOB		9	62 a
17 18	58 a	JUDGES		1 1, 2, &c.	208 a	12, 13	58 a
18 19	159 a	2 11, 12	19 a	8	78 a	12, &c.	111 a
18 20	2 b	1 SAMUEL		8	159 a	13	109 b
19 9	218 b	1 2	25 a	12	149 a	18	54 a
22	222 b	13	128 a	21	159 a	18, 19	54 a
20 25, 26	203 b	2 3, 4	53 a	21, 22	54 a	19	17 b
22 30	177 a	5	26 a	2 6	76 a	37 7, 12	230 a
23 19	41 a	8	179 a	9, 10	58 a	25	147 a
23 24	27 a	29	63 a	10	159 a	25, 26	51 a
24 7, 8, 9	35 a	25	172 a	14 4	70 a	25, 26	209 a
17	35 a	30	142 a	29 12	80 a	35, 36	157 b
25 8, 11	235 b	30	233 a	12, 13, &c.	50 a	41	51 a
29 7	218 b	35, 36	25 a	PSALMS		1	201 a
19, 20	218 b	6 10, 15	40 a	1 1	102 a	44 22	61 a
DEUTERONOMY		7 9, 12	40 a	2	81 a	45 1	30 a
4 24	235 b	8 7	7 b	5	64 a	1, 2, &c.	47 a
8 13	61 a	7	158 b	2 1, 2, 3	23 a	6, 7	33 a
13	56 a	7	196 b	1, 2, 3	81 a	9, 10, 11	47 a
13	118 a	16 7	135 b	6, 7	46 a	10, 11	258 b
13	171 a	7	70 a	7, 8	34 a	46 10	33 a
13	187 a	7	131 a	9	126 b	50 1, 2, &c.	45 a
2, 3	160 a	17 49	40 a	9	140 b	3, 4, &c.	225 a
3	267 b	4	65 a	10	80 a	14, &c.	24 a
10 20	187 a	6, 7	219 a	11	62 a	14, 15	64 a
13 3	59 a	2 SAMUEL		11, 12	82 a	16	82 a
13 3	160 a	1 15, 16	219 a	12	74 a	16, 17	74 a
13 3	175 a	7 4, 5, &c.	24 a	12	10 b	16, &c.	186 b
13 5	104 b	4, 5, &c.	36 a	3 5	44 a	17, 18	206 b
6, 7, &c.	172 a	KINGS		4 4	139 a	18	74 a
12, &c.	173 a	1 4	73 a	5 2, 3	47 a	19, 20	109 b
12 12	105 b	14	109 a	2, 3	153 a	20	79 a
12, 13	6 b	14	149 a	6 5	80 a	8	70 a
12, 13	12 b	14 23	176 a	5	135 b	17	54 a
12, 13	158 b	29, &c.	100 a	5	142 b	17	159 a
12, 13	196 b	13 9	214 b	15 5	68 a	17	267 b
18 10	76 a	24	214 b	16 10	44 a	53 5	70 a
18 19	25 a	17 6	147 a	18 25, 26	78 a	5	85 a
21 5	4 b	6	204 a	43, 44	27 a	56 11	55 a
21 10	68 a	14	208 a	19 14	253 b	61 1	55 a
21, 23	64 a	18 21	249 a	5, 6	41 a	68 1, 2, &c.	46 a
25 9, 10	41 a	28	79 a	9	62 a	4	33 a
27 8	39 a	19 10	20 a	12	70 a	5	80 a
28 44	27 a	10	205 b	4	58 b	6	77 a
30 6	42 a	KINGS		7, 8	176 a	6	29 b
30 6	22 a	6 14	189 b	6, 7, &c.	37 a	72 1, 2	47 a
30 10	69 a	6	141 b	16, &c.	43 a	1, 2	65 a
30 17	19 a	17 5	108 a	27, 28	46 a	23 27	253 b
30 17	172 a	17 20, 21	214 b	23 5	183 b	24 12	47 a
35 35	79 a	11	149 a	24 3, 4, &c.	41 a	32 1, 6, 7	33 a
35 35	171 a	2 CHRON.		3, 4	76 a	3	54 a
35 35	141 a	3, 4, &c.	36 a	7	1147 a	5	20 a
35 35	174 a	2 CHRON.		5 4, 5	34 a	5	33 a
35 35	174 a	2 2	863 a	7 13, 4	176 a	8	46 a
35 35	207 a	2	817 a	4	1252 b	1, 2	71 a
35 35	148 a	20	168 b	4 5	20 a	1, 2	165 a
35 35						PSALMS	

of SCRIPTURE cited, &c.

PSALMS		PROVERBS		ISAIAH		ISAIAH	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
88 9	42 a	12 16	55 a	14, &c.	28 a	2, 3, 4	37 a
27, &c.	29 a	22	79 a	17, 18	80 a	6, 7, 8	34 a
89 30, &c.	118 a	13 24	79 a	19, 20	69 a	13, 14	46 a
30, &c.	29 b	14 9	240 a	2	252 b	13, 14	215 a
32, 33	71 a	15 3	70 a	2, 3, &c.	41 a	24, 25	127 a
32, 33	138 b	10, 12	12 b	3, 4	22 a	24, 25	149 a
33	29 b	27	200 a	5, 6	22 a	1, 2, 3	178 a
94 11	215 a	16 1	235 a	8, 9	118 a	18, &c.	23 a
96 5	72 a	6	50 a	8, 9	172 a	1	27 a
97 1	47 a	27	169 b	8, 9	193 a	14, &c.	32 a
107 20	30 a	32	55 a	8, 9	192 b	21	23 a
110 1, 2	45 a	17 4	169 b	12	157 b	6	28 a
3, 4	24 a	4	198 b	3 1	28 a	5, 6	37 a
3, 4	180 b	18 19	135 b	12	80 a	5, 6	225 a
111 10	62 a	19 5	262 b	12	122 a	10	31 a
112 9	51 a	17	50 a	12	83 b	11	66 a
115 4, 5, &c.	171 a	17	152 a	16, &c.	88 a	11	120 a
116 12, &c.	267 b	17	207 a	4 1	179 a	15	27 a
15	59 a	18	79 a	5 5, 6	37 b	1	31 a
15	182 a	20 7	50 a	7	184 b	1, 2, &c.	31 a
15	16 b	7	209 a	8	73 a	7	225 a
15	26 b	9	201 a	25, 26	27 a	7, 8, &c.	38 a
118 6	176 a	13	79 a	26, 27	28 a	7	37 b
6, 8, 9	55 a	22	79 a	6 9, 10	20 a	1, 2, &c.	25 a
18	71 a	22	194 a	7 9	21 a	1	79 a
22, &c.	39 a	21 1	76 a	9	67 a	4	27 a
22, &c.	153 a	13	50 a	10, &c.	35 a	6, 7	56 a
26	32 a	13	201 a	13, 14	26 b	1, 2	38 a
119 1, 2	61 a	23 9	69 a	8 26	22 a	6	172 a
1, 2	183 a	9	185 a	9 6	43 a	6	163 b
120	42 a	24 15	78 a	12	27 a	6	192 b
126 5, 6	59 a	25 21, 22	50 a	10 22, 23	150 a	1	201 a
5, 6	182 a	26 4	185 a	11 1, 2	36 a	1, 2, &c.	49 a
130 16	131 a	27	80 a	10	27 a	6, &c.	152 a
132 11	36 a	28 14	62 a	13 6, 9	195 a	7	75 a
133 1	77 a	27	56 a	14 13, 14	157 b	7, &c.	201 a
1	252 b	27	204 a	15, 16	157 b	1, 2, &c.	31 a
135 15, &c.	72 a	28	55 a	16, 17	81 a	1, 2, &c.	68 a
17	171 a	29 22	263 b	20 22, 23	30 a	1, 2	127 a
141 2	42 a	ECCLESIASTES		22 13, 14	72 a	1, 2	190 a
2	186 b	5 4	64 a	26 11	31 a	1, 2	35 a
5	223 b	9	72 a	28 16	38 a	2	181 b
PROVERBS		7 16	70 a	29 10	134 a	9	34 a
1 28, 29	20 a	10 9	76 a	10	164 b	1	27 a
3 11, 12	74 a	CANTICLES		11, 18	20 a	2	42 a
11, 12	82 a	4 8	258 b	13	185 b	13, &c.	28 a
28	50 a	12	246 a	13	202 b	1, 2	31 a
5 15	262 b	12	212 b	13	246 b	1, 2	54 a
6 14	222 b	12	262 b	14	215 a	2	62 a
8 22, &c.	29 a	12, &c.	250 b	15	70 a	2	36 b
9 1	26 a	12, 13	259 b	30 1	159 b	2	64 b
1, 2, &c.	30 a	5 1	258 b	15	83 b	15, 16	225 a
1, 2, &c.	180 b	2	151 a	15	135 a	18	27 a
8	79 a	6 5	212 b	33 10, 11	44 a	24	197 a
12	239 a	9	97 a	14, &c.	46 a	JEREMIAH	
19	239 a	ISAIAH		35 3, 4, &c.	34 a	1 5	27 a
30 3	147 a	1 2	234 a	40 3, 4, 5	32 a	5	126 a
3	204 a	2, 3, 4	20 a	6, 7, 8	86 a	2 13	20 a
9	69 a	2, 3, 4	141 a	6, 8	71 a	13	103 a
9	79 a	7, 8, 9	21 a	15, &c.	31 a	13	222 b
16	72 a	11, 12	24 a	2	225 a	30	188 a
				G 558		JEREMIAH	

A TABLE of the TEXTS

JEREMIAH			EZEKIEL			ZEPHANIAH			WISDOM		
Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.	Ch.	ver.	pag.
3	9, 19	186 b	36	25, 26	218 b	3	8	79 a		1, 2, &c.	171 a
	15	24 a		25, 26	222 b		8	225 a	15	15, &c.	72 a
	15	74 a	37	11, &c.	71 a	HAGGAI				15, &c.	171 a
	15	83 a	DANIEL			1	9, 10, 11	187 a	ECCLESIASTICUS		
	15	10 b	2	31, &c.	40 a	ZECHARIAH			1	14	56 a
4	3, 4	22 a	3	12	173 b	1	14	46 a		16	62 a
5	3	188 a		12	206 b	3	1, 3, &c.	37 a	2	1	158 a
6	10	20 a		16, &c.	17 b		8, 9	39 a		4, 5	159 a
	17	27 a		16, &c.	151 b		9	26 a		4, 5	223 a
7	16	126 a		16, &c.	174 b	10	11, 12	33 a	3	21	70 a
	16	172 a		16, &c.	55 a	12	10	42 a		30	50 a
	25, 26	20 a		16, &c.	178 a	MALACHI				30	200 a
8	4	80 a		23	133 a	1	10, 11	24 a	4	10	80 a
	7, 8, 9	20 a		25	104 a		14	46 a		29	78 a
9	23, 24	55 a		27	67 a	2	1, 2	164 b	5	4	66 a
10	2	65 a		51	140 a		1, 2	248 b		7	78 a
11	18, 19	38 a	4	27	201 a		5, 6, 7	32 a	6	16	78 a
	19	42 a	6	20	206 b		10	52 a	7	29, 31	7 b
15	9	44 a		23	174 b		11, 12	19 a		35	78 a
	18	234 b	7	13, 14	44 a	3	3	71 a	9	13	78 a
16	9	41 a	9	4, 5, &c.	133 a	4	1	45 a		16	78 a
17	5	125 a	12	4	21 a		1	195 a	10	26	69 a
	5, 7	56 a	HOSEA				1	225 a	11	28	39 b
	9	35 a	1	10	25 a		2	153 a	14	11, 12	50 a
23	16, 17	102 a	2	23	16 a	1st of ESDRAS			18	22	81 a
	16, 17	104 b		23	25 a	4	38, 39	249 b	23	11	58 a
	20	21 a	4	1, 2	68 a	TOBIT			24	3, 4, &c.	29 a
	21, 22	102 a		1, 2	189 a	2	2	50 a	25	9	78 a
	23, 24	70 a	5	15	153 a		14	55 a	27	5	54 a
	23, 24	131 a	6	1	153 a		14	159 a		5	160 a
	23, 24	138 a		2	44 a	4	5, 6, &c.	50 a		5	175 a
	28, &c.	186 b		6	51 a		5, 6, &c.	209 a	28	13	80 a
25	4, 5, 6	20 a	8	4	159 b		10	137 b		28	78 a
	6	172 a	9	4	159 b		12	73 a		28	169 b
	6	187 a		4	203 b	12	6, 7, 12, &c.	159 a		28	198 b
30	8, 9	23 a		4	216 b		8	151 a	29	12	50 a
31	10, 11	24 a	11	9, 10	33 a		8, 9	202 a		12	201 a
	31, &c.	23 a	JOEL				9	208 a	34	19	80 a
48	10	64 a	2	12, 13	132 a		11, &c.	152 a		25	245 a
EZEKIEL				12, 13	138 b		15	26 a		25	226 b
9	4	196 a		13	135 a	13	6	178 a	BARUCH		
	4, 5, 6	43 a		13	216 a	14	10	209 a	3	35, &c.	32 a
	5, 6	196 a		15, 16	41 a	WISDOM			EPISTLE of JEREMY		
14	12, &c.	172 a	AMOS			1	1	69 a		ver. 6	139 a
	13, &c.	126 a	4	7, 8	187 a		13	138 b	SONG of the 3 CHIL-		
18	5	68 a		6	196 a	2	13, &c.	37 a	DREN		
	20	141 b	8	9, 10	44 a		24	229 a		ver. 25, 26	17 b
	23, 34	216 a	MICAH			3	4, &c.	59 a		28	140 a
	32	135 a	4	2, 3	22 a		4, &c.	182 a	HISTORY of SUSAN-		
33	11	80 a		2	36 a		4, &c.	16 b	NAH		
	11	135 a	HABBAKKUK			11		10 b		ver. 20	103 b
	11	216 a	2	4	25 a		11	74 a	BEL and DRAGON		
	12	174 a		4	67 a		11	82 a		ver. 5	152 b
	12	221 a		4	159 b	4	11, 14	71 a		5	178 a
34	3, 4, 5	148 b		5	157 b		11, 14	165 a		35	205 a
	4, &c.	209 b		5	210 b	5	1, 2, &c.	59 a	1 MACCABEES		
	10	24 a	3	3, 4, 5	43 a		1, 2, &c.	182 a	2	19	205 b
	10	148 b		17, 18	195 a		1, 2, &c.	197 a		23, 24	173 a
	10	209 b	ZEPHANIAH				8, 9	87 a		52	59 a
	16	148 b	1	2, 3	68 a		6	80 a		60	70 a
	16	209 b		7	42 a	13	1, 2, &c.	72 a		62, 63	54 a
	34	21 b		13, 14	73 a					1 MAC-	

Of Scripture cited, &c.

I MACCABEES		St. MATTHEW		St. MATTHEW		St. MATTHEW	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
62, 63	157 b	23, 24	104 a	16	95 a	45, 46	203 a
2 MACCABEES		24	148 a	16	227 a	14	31
6	21	24	235 a	18, &c.	77 b	15	4
24	181 a	5	26	19	26 b	13	240 b
30	61 a	34, 37	58 a	19	152 b	14	104 b
30	181 a	36	90 a	19, 20	147 b	14	107 a
7	1	37	166 b	19, 20	267 b	14	242 a
1, 3, &c.	179 a	42	51 a	19, 20	60 a	14	255 a
7	179 a	43, &c.	216 a	19, 20	176 a	16	18
9	61 a	43, &c.	233 a	20	276 b	18, 19	97 a
9, 10, &c.	180 a	44	145 a	21	174 a	18, 19	81 b
14	61 a	44, 45	69 a	22	60 a	19	146 b
16, &c.	61 a	45	145 a	22	83 a	19	234 b
27, &c.	181 a	6	3, 4, 5	22	109 a	19	252 b
9, 12	54 a	6	138 a	22	220 a	27, &c.	182 b
15	13	9, &c.	139 a	22	33 b	17	5
St. MATTHEW		10	61 a	22	39 b	20	67 a
1	20, 21	12	62 a	23	120 a	18	17
23	34 a	19, &c.	203 a	25	75 a	17	212 b
2	1, 2	20, 21	51 a	28	174 a	19	29 b
1, 2	47 a	24	252 a	28	16 b	19, 20	52 a
16	152 b	26	56 a	28	153 b	19, 20	102 a
3	9	26	205 a	28, &c.	60 a	20	102 a
10	235 b	31, &c.	56 a	29	159 b	23, &c.	148 a
10	63 a	31, &c.	147 a	29	195 b	32	147 a
10	203 a	31, &c.	204 a	32	33 b	32	74 b
11	23 a	34	130 a	32	72 b	19	11
15	217 a	34	146 a	32, 33	45 b	11	84 a
16	101 a	7	2	32, 33	151 b	12	93 a
17	23 a	6	69 a	32, 33	127 a	12	13 b
4	2	6	185 a	33	125 a	17	95 a
3, &c.	217 a	6	78 b	33	74 b	17, 18	51 a
10	118 a	9, &c.	138 b	33	163 b	21	121 a
5	4	12	150 a	33	239 b	21	146 a
4	138 b	13, 14	55 a	33, 34	173 a	21	203 a
5	54 a	14	92 a	36	157 b	20	2
6	182 b	14	13 b	37	207 a	28	245 b
6, 7	51 a	19	151 a	37	207 a	22	12, 13
7	203 a	21	61 a	37, 38	61 a	32	81 b
8	76 a	21	238 b	37, 38	174 a	37, &c.	106 a
8	116 b	22, 23	63 a	37, 38	77 b	39	171 a
9	52 a	22, 23	106 a	42	51 a	39	37 b
9	111 a	24	232 a	11	242 b	40	150 a
9	235 a	24	128 b	13	22 a	23	6, 7, 8
10	66 a	24, &c.	78 a	28, &c.	23 a	9	141 a
10	183 a	24, 25	96 a	28, &c.	81 a	9	179 a
10, &c.	77 b	8	7 b	12	229 a	12	109 a
13	77 a	4	158 b	29, &c.	150 a	12	40 b
13	95 a	11	163 a	30	77 a	37	217 a
13	145 a	11	5 b	30	99 a	37, 38	21 a
13	240 a	11, 12	28 a	30	242 a	24	2
15	96 b	11, 12	143 a	30	244 a	4, &c.	177 a
16	36 b	11	212 a	32	63 a	5	238 b
16	63 a	20	56 a	34	157 b	24	264 b
19	78 a	22	141 a	36, 37	58 a	25	238 b
19	232 a	29	46 a	39, 40	44 a	42	227 a
19	185 b	9	134 b	3	219 b	25	31, &c.
19	268 b	12	210 b	8	92 a	31, &c.	51 a
21, 22	55 a	10	215 b	17	45 a	31, &c.	211 a
22	58 a	8	79 a	25	126 b	34	143 a
22	158 b	16	77 a	45, 46	51 a	34	234 a
23, 24	53 a						St. MATTHEW

TABLE of the TEXTS

St. MATTHEW		St. LUKE		St. LUKE		St. JOHN	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
36	80 a	30, &c.	36 a	48	109 a	5	241 b
36	202 a	35	36 a	50	241 b	5, 6	23 a
36	177 b	41, &c.	34 a	11	54 a	5, 6	63 a
40	207 a	67, &c.	34 a	12, &c.	54 a	6	240 a
46 16	157 b	10, 11	34 a	14	151 b	14, 15	43 a
25	217 a	26	156 a	33	56 a	18	63 a
39	61 a	28, &c.	156 a	33	146 a	18, 19	22 a
39	143 a	29, 30	72 a	33	174 a	27	53 a
40	217 a	37	154 a	4	134 b	27	252 a
27 3, 4	38 a	4 8	187 a	7	120 b	28, 29	41 a
18	229 a	11	37 b	7	138 b	36	45 a
29	218 a	16	150 a	10	252 b	40 23	137 a
29, 30	217 a	22	138 a	16 8	240 b	24	240 a
34	218 a	6 12	150 a	9	205 a	132, 34	72 a
35	218 a	12	30 b	14	205 a	5	218 b
45, 46	153 a	22, 23	77 b	15	210 b	14	63 a
28 15, &c.	9 b	22, 23	150 b	24	158 b	14	83 a
18	241 a	22, 23	60 a	25	73 a	14	144 a
18, &c.	45 a	22, 23	121 a	17 7, &c.	69 a	14	200 a
18, &c.	240 a	22, 23	183 a	10	82 b	14	36 b
18, &c.	68 b	30	51 a	21	69 a	14	140 b
18, &c.	187 b	32	69 a	31	174 a	22	125 a
19	246 a	36	212 a	18 2	46 b	22, 23	44 a
19	248 a	37	62 a	8	205 b	22, 23	65 a
19	66 b	56	134 b	8	249 b	30	28 b
19	233 b	7 9	137 a	8	112 a	31, 32	196 b
19	139 b	47	80 a	10	139 a	39, 40	25 a
20	16 b	9 24	183 a	10, &c.	139 a	43	32 a
St. MARK		25	73 a	29, 30	60 a	45, &c.	25 a
3 14	8 b	48	54 a	29, 30	183 a	6 35	28 a
21	157 b	48	37 b	29, 30	150 b	38	61 a
28, 29	63 a	56	189 b	8, 9	52 a	38	86 a
28, 29	45 b	62	31 b	8, 9	203 a	38	143 a
4 24	62 a	62	56 a	9	180 b	50	184 b
7 2	200 a	62	174 a	17	22 b	51	145 a
9	108 a	10 16	158 b	34, &c.	64 a	53	28 a
9	105 b	16	197 b	34, &c.	93 a	63	63 a
9	185 b	19	220 b	35, 4	207 a	53	146 a
9	202 b	31, 32	136 b	14, 15	176 a	67, &c.	160 b
13	246 b	34, &c.	209 b	14, 15	267 b	67, &c.	199 b
8 38	131 a	10	29 b	17	63 a	7 37, 38	28 a
38	185 b	23	104 b	31	156 a	37, 38	181 b
9 23	67 a	23	212 b	22 24	231 a	37, 38	236 b
10 29, 30	121 a	23	224 b	31, 32	150 a	39	182 b
11 24	67 a	23	258 b	31, 32	30 b	8 12	34 a
25	104 a	40, 41	52 a	43 43	241 b	12	220 a
25, 26	62 a	40, 41	200 a	44, &c.	21 a	12	186 b
25, 26	148 a	8	72 b	St. JOHN		24	21 a
12 29	171 a	9	74 b	1	33 a	31, 32	174 a
29, &c.	106 a	10	240 b	1, 2, &c.	30 a	31, 32	220 a
13 6	105 a	20	73 a	9, 19	22 a	34, 35	141 a
6	206 b	20	146 a	11, 12	20 a	44	141 a
23	107 a	20	205 a	11, 12	140 a	9 6	217 a
14 38	149 a	33	52 a	26, 27	42 a	31	252 a
58	24 a	33	203 a	29	39 a	31	192 b
65	218 a	35, &c.	42 a	9	183 b	31	202 b
15 3, 4, 5	225 a	35, &c.	56 a	16	79 a	31	223 b
16 17, 18	248 a	35, &c.	112 a	18, 19	212 b	39	45 a
St. LUKE		35, &c.	175 a	19	24 a	11, 12	21 b
17 17	217 b	47	61 a	30 5	239 a	16	214 b
17 17	243 b	47	28 b	30 5	228 b		

of Scripture cited, &c.

St. JOHN		St. JOHN		ROMANS		I CORINTHIANS	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
16	101 a	24	72 a	17	156 a	10	177 a
18	44 a	24	165 a	25, 26	56 a	10	161 a
30	99 a	18 22, 23	7 b	30, 32	206 b	17, &c.	74 a
30	214 b	22, 23	158 b	2 1, 3	162 a	16	256 b
35, &c.	34 a	22, 23	196 b	4, 5, 6	166 a	9	154 b
11 25, 26	164 a	36, 37	47 a	4, 5, 6	216 a	22, &c.	30 a
12 25	60 a	19 1	218 a	12	78 a	3 1, 2, 3	52 a
25	174 a	11	76 a	13	78 a	1, 2, 3	233 a
25	16 b	11	149 a	24	136 b	16	151 b
25	153 b	23, 24	100 a	3 3, 4	110 a	16	176 b
13 6	217 a	15	21 b	3, 4	249 a	16, 17	63 a
14, 15	67 a	21, &c.	97 a	3, 4	160 b	17	83 a
14, 15	39 b	21, &c.	217 b	3, 4	199 b	18, &c.	75 a
16	37 b	21, &c.	234 b	3, 4	206 b	18, &c.	215 a
16	126 b	22, 23	259 b	8	78 a	4 7	53 a
16, 17	54 a	27	95 b	13, &c.	231 a	20	78 a
27	76 a	27, &c.	33 a	23, 24	45 a	3	53 b
14 2	93 a	21 16	97 a	4 3	203 a	7, 8	90 a
6	45 a	ACTS		5 2, 3, &c.	55 a	6 1, 2, &c.	67 a
6	62 a	1 7	77 a	3, 4, 5	175 a	9, &c.	74 a
6	246 a	14	111 a	8, 9	136 b	9, &c.	142 a
6	249 b	14	140 a	8 12, &c.	233 a	10	37 b
6	238 b	15	203 b	16	61 a	10	158 b
13	203 a	2 2, 3, 4	79 a	16, 17	175 a	15, &c.	73 a
27	52 a	15	153 a	16, 17	17 b	18	140 b
27	105 a	38, 39	239 b	16, 17	150 b	18, &c.	74 a
27	111 a	3 6	87 a	18	154 b	19, 20	56 a
27	8 b	6, 7	73 a	18	268 b	19, 20	83 a
27	29 b	4 8, 9, &c.	40 a	18	61 a	20	142 a
27	37 b	32	53 a	18	183 a	7 1, 2, &c.	65 a
28	72 a	32	111 a	24, 25	68 a	9	11 b
28	158 a	32	212 a	24, 25	220 a	10, 11	77 a
28	239 b	32	29 b	35	31 b	29, &c.	56 a
15 1	179 b	5 3, 4	64 a	35, &c.	61 a	30, 31	87 a
12	105 a	6 2	104 a	35, &c.	174 a	32	85 a
12	29 b	2	2 b	35, &c.	77 b	32, 33	65 a
12 13	52 a	2	203 b	9 3, 4	33 a	33, 34	85 a
14, 15	95 a	7 56	184 a	10 1	260 b	34	85 a
14, 15	184 b	8 17	235 b	9	72 b	39	73 a
18, &c.	152 b	20	78 a	16	31 a	8 2	62 a
18	63 a	36, 37	67 a	11 8	20 a	8	72 a
18, &c.	177 a	9 15	93 a	20, 21	54 a	13	11 b
16 2	160 b	15	66 b	20, 21	36 b	9 22	134 b
2, 3	60 a	36, &c.	202 a	33	70 a	24	175 a
2, 3, 4	177 a	10 2, 3, 4	152 a	12 1, 2	175 a	24, 25	63 a
2, 3, 4	150 b	9	153 a	1, 2	267 b	24, 25	26 b
20	157 a	28	190 b	11	14 b	10 1	21 a
20	177 a	13 46	27 a	15	116 a	1	220 b
22	157 a	47	27 a	15	136 b	6	220 b
23	137 a	15 28, 29	81 a	17, 21	82 a	12	62 a
33	54 a	16 23	59 a	19	194 a	12 11	135 b
33	177 a	19 3, 5	255 b	20	50 a	13	77 a
33	220 a	40 5	242 b	13 3	66 a	21	123 a
17 1	239 b	23 4	158 b	7, 8	54 a	21	45 b
3	150 a	40 5	7 b	12	231 a	23	77 a
3	172 a	40 5	197 b	14	101 a	23	87 a
3	196 a	5	158 b	14 4	62 a	23	134 b
3	238 b	ROMANS		4	135 b	11 1	134 b
3, 4, 5	29 a	1 8	71 b	12, 13	221 b	11 1	267 b
26, 21	150 a	8	165 b	17	72 a	14, 15	96 a
12	253 b	8	170 b	17	254 b	16	243 b
				H h h h		I CORIN-	

A Table of the Texts

1 CORINTHIANS			GALATIANS			EPHESIANS			1 TIMOTHY		
Ch. ver.	pag.		Ch. ver.	pag.		Ch. ver.	pag.		Ch. ver.	pag.	
19	77 a		1 6, 7, &c.	66 b		4	75 a		3, 4, 5	246 b	
19	102 a		6, 7, &c.	183 b		5, 6	75 a		7, &c.	73 a	
23, &c.	182 b		10	70 a		9	75 a		7, &c.	146 a	
26	186 b		10	85 a		12, &c.	81 a		7, &c.	204 a	
27	77 a		10	13 b		12, &c.	153 b		9, 10	121 a	
27	123 a		10	161 b		PHILIPPIANS			2 TIMOTHY		
27	42 b		10	185 b		8	261 b		4	2 b	
27	45 b		2 6	190 b		14, &c.	237 b		4, 5	57 a	
27	261 b		14	251 a		14, &c.	261 b		4, 5	175 a	
33, 34	72 a		3 6, 7, &c.	21 a		18	237 b		11, 12	173 a	
26	47 b		6, 7	180 b		6, &c.	37 a		16, 17	104 b	
26	134 b		27	247 b		6, &c.	66 a		17	169 b	
26	176 b		27	257 b		8, 9	226 a		17	249 b	
13 2, 3, &c.	53 a		27	176 b		12, &c.	59 a		17	134 a	
2, 3, &c.	105 a		4 4	35 a		15	63 a		20	126 b	
3	148 a		16	13 b		15	36 b		20	139 b	
3	241 b		5 15	37 b		21	57 a		23, 24	70 a	
4	232 a		17, &c.	74 a		21	158 a		24	249 b	
4, 5, &c.	221 a		17, &c.	144 a		13	31 b		3 1	160 b	
12	69 a		18, 19	53 a		19, &c.	57 a		1	205 b	
14 29, 30	227 b		19, &c.	240 a		20, 21	165 a		1, 2, &c.	106 a	
30	249 b		24	85 a		20, 21	267 b		4 3, 4	74 a	
30	253 b		6 1, 2	55 a		18	152 a		6, 7, 8	60 a	
34, 35	68 a		1, 2	135 a		COLOSSIANS			6, 7, 8	26 b	
32	39 b		7	131 a		15, 18	30 a		TITUS		
33	78 a		7	135 b		2	134 b		1 7	205 b	
33	169 b		7	204 b		8, 9	215 a		15	190 b	
36	71 a		9, 10	212 a		11	22 a		3 2	79 a	
41, &c.	71 a		9, 10	221 a		20	57 a		5	247 b	
47, &c.	36 a		14	57 a		1, 2, &c.	57 a		10, 11	76 a	
47, &c.	57 a		14	85 a		1, 2, &c.	233 a		10, 11	169 b	
47, &c.	93 a		EPHESIANS			5, 6	140 b		10, 11	213 b	
47	145 a		2 17, 18	45 a		4 2	30 b		11	107 a	
47, &c.	233 a		4 1, 2, &c.	263 b		2	81 a		11	236 b	
53, &c.	71 a		2 3	139 b		2	151 a		11	245 b	
54	158 a		2, 3	101 a		1 THESSALONIANS			HERREWS		
2 CORINTHIANS			2, 3	222 a		4 6	77 a		6 4	247 a	
3 14, &c.	21 a		3	271 b		13, 14	71 a		8 8, &c.	23 a	
5 2, 3, 4	212 a		3, 4, &c.	240 a		13, 14	164 a		12 6	30 b	
7, 8	58 a		4, 5	238 a		5 2, 3	77 a		1 St. PETER		
10	46 a		4, 5, 6	97 a		2 THESSALONIANS			2 3, 4	66 a	
10	70 a		4, 5, 6	250 b		2 10, &c.	134 a		11, 12	57 a	
15	174 a		5	242 a		11, 12	164 b		11, 12	36 b	
6 5	39 b		5, 6	264 b		3 6	74 a		21	232 a	
14	73 a		17	10 b		6	110 a		21, &c.	66 a	
14	117 a		22	51 b		6	169 b		21, &c.	218 a	
14	238 b		22, &c.	57 a		8	39 b		3 3, 4	87 a	
8 12, 13	52 a		26	57 a		TIMOTHY			18	45 a	
14, 15	52 a		29	57 a		13	237 b		20, 21	212 b	
9 6, 7, &c.	52 a		29	57 a		1	2 b		20, 21	250 b	
10, 11	204 a		30	57 a		9	87 a		21	259 b	
12	204 a		30	57 a		9, 10	66 a		4 6	45 a	
11 2	258 b		3, 4	57 a		11	68 a		12, &c.	175 a	
13	264 b		5	140 b		17	102 a		12, &c.	150 b	
29	47 b		6, 7	105 b		4 12	8 b		15, 16	66 a	
29	176 b		6, 7	194 b		3, &c.	75 a		5 8	228 a	
13 2, 4	39 b		6, 7	110 a		8	75 a		2 St. PETER		
7, &c.	55 a		25, 26	213 b		19	75 a		3 17	254 b	
7, &c.	160 a		25, 26	248 b		20	76 a		1 St. JOHN		
20, 21	140 b		31, 32	122 b		22	248 a		1 8	70 a	
			6 1, 2, 3	75 a		6 3, 4, 5	105 b		8, 9	147 a	
									1 St. JOHN		

of SCRIPTURE cited, &c.

1 St. JOHN		1 St. JOHN		REVELATIONS		REVELATIONS	
Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.	Ch. ver.	pag.
8, 9	201 a	15	232 a	10	33 b	14	44 a
1	137 a	17	52 a	10	39 b	4	65 a
1, 2	135 b	17	207 a	20, &c.	137 b	4	84 a
2	30 b	21, 22	76 a	23	70 a	6, 7	171 a
3, 4	68 b	4	238 b	23	131 a	9, &c.	172 a
6	77 a	4	25 b	23	138 a	9, &c.	153 b
6	86 a	4	56 a	23	163 a	9, &c.	192 b
6	218 a	4	176 a	23	27 b	15	60 a
6	150 b	16	53 a	23	140 b	1, 2, &c.	66 a
9	53 a	16	105 a	3	164 a	1, 2, &c.	88 a
9, 11	232 a	20	53 a	11	109 a	15	184 b
15	86 a	5	99 a	11	175 a	4	120 a
15	143 a	7	236 b	11	221 a	4, &c.	65 a
15, &c.	57 a	2 St. JOHN		17, 18	206 a	6, 7	42 a
15, &c.	165 a	ver. 10, 11	254 a	19	123 a	11, &c.	47 a
18, 19	242 a	REVELATIONS		21	77 b	11, 13	30 a
18, 19	224 b	12, &c.	45 a	5	1, 2, &c.	4	183 a
19	160 b	14	90 a	6	26 a	6	30 a
19	76 a	20	26 a	6, &c.	39 a	6, 7	33 a
19	102 a	2	5	9, &c.	60 a	6, 7	79 a
23	45 a	5	51 b	9, &c.	125 a	9, &c.	41 a
23	173 a	5	83 b	9, &c.	225 a	9	226 a
23	239 b	5	137 b	7	60 a	10, &c.	225 a
10, 15	53 a	7, 10	60 a	9, &c.	182 a	10, &c.	62 a
15	148 a	10	176 a	13, &c.	182 a	13, 14	44 a

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